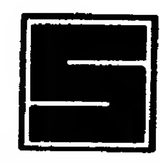
Al-Ghazzali on REPENTANCE

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existence, it is also a continuing part of man's quest for salvation.

Many of al-Ghazzālī's insights and teachings can be seen in the earlier traditions of Judaism and Christianity. To a large degree, also, al-Ghazzālī drew directly from earlier Muslim sources, traditional and mystic.[209] The unique contribution that was al-Ghazzālī's remains his mastery in two areas. Firstly, he possessed in his own person, the vast and variegated knowledge that was classical Islam. He was Koranic devotee, theologian, jurist, student of mystical theory, and defender of orthodoxy locked in debate with sectarianism and philosophy. He possessed this knowledge and integrated it into his own spiritual life and quest. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, he was a master pedagogue. He was devoted to his fellow believers and was, because of his belief in the idea of renewal dedicated to sharing his quest.

It is in this light that we proceed to al-Ghazzālī's *Book of Repentance*.

PART TWO

TRANSLATION OF BOOK XXXI OF THE IḤYĀ' 'ULŪM AD-DĪN

[2][210] THE BOOK OF REPENTANCE

Which is the first book in the Quarter of Salvation of the Book of the Revival of the Religious Sciences

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

Praise to God, with whose praise every book is prefaced; with whose invocation every discourse commences; by whose praise the people of felicity shall abide with ease in the abode of recompense; and by whose name the wretched are consoled, even if the bar is set down before them, and they are separated from the blissful by a portaled wall; inside thereof Divine Mercy obtains, while outside Divine Chastisement proceeds.

We turn unto Him in penitence, convinced that He is master of all masters and originator of all causes. We look to Him in anticipation, knowing Him to be the King, compassionate, forgiving and disposed to accept penitence. We blend dread with hope, not doubting that while being forgiving of transgression and receptive to repentance He is also stern in inflicting punishment.

We pray for His prophet Muḥammad, God bless him, and for his family and companions,[211] a prayer that will rescue us from the terror of the place whence one will look down on the day of resurrection[212] and will secure for us nearness to and safe refuge with God.

But to proceed; Repentance from sin, by recourse to the Veiler of vices, Knower of secrets, is the starting point for the followers of the spiritual path, the capital of the successful, the first step of the aspirants, key to the straightening of the bent, the prelude of the selection and election for those who are brought close to God; and for our father Adam, God bless him,[213] and all the other prophets. How appropriate it is for children to emulate their fathers and ancestors. It is small wonder if a son of Adam sins and does wrong, a disposition which one who trans-

gresses may recognize as a hereditary trait.[214] For who resembles his father and does no evil? But if the father is restored after failing[215] and is revitalized after aging, let the emulation of him be at both poles, of the negative and the positive. Adam has been smitten with remorse, filled with repentance over his past deeds. Anyone who follows him as a model of sinning [only], and not in penitence, has stumbled.

Devotion to pure goodness is a trait of the angels close to God. Devotion to uncorrected evil is the nature of devils. But, return to good after stumbling in evil is inevitable in human beings. The devotee of absolute good is an angel intimate of the King [who is] Judge. The devotee of evil only is a devil. But he who rectifies evil by returning to good, is, in truth, human. So, in man's nature there is a duality of disposition, two traits joining in him.

Every human being verifies his relationship with the Angel, Adam or the Devil. The penitent, by keeping to the definition of Man, truly proves that he is related to Adam, whilst he who persists in iniquity is proving that he is related to the Devil. Confirmation of relationship to the Angels, [3] however, by dedication exclusively to the good, is beyond the realm of possibility. For evil is firmly kneaded with good in the nature of man, and it cannot be refined except by one of the two fires: of penitence, or of Hell. Burning in fire is necessary to purify the human essence of the Satanic pollution.[216] It is up to you now to choose the easier fire,[217] and to be prompt in embarking on the lesser discomfort before the choice is withdrawn to give way to the inevitability[218] of either Paradise or Hell.

Since[219] repentance holds such a place within the faith, it must be put first in the Quarter of Salvation with explanation of its true nature, requisites, motivation, manifestation and benefit, the difficulties barring it,[220] and the remedies facilitating it. This will become clear by discussing four pillars.

The First Pillar: On the Nature of Repentance.

Explication of its definition and true character; that it is obligatory, at once, for all men, under all conditions and, if properly carried through, accepted.

The Second Pillar: On the Context of Repentance (i.e. transgression).

Explication of sin's division into venial and mortal sins, some toward one's fellow-man others toward God; how higher and lower states [in the hereafter] are distributed according to good and evil works [in this life]; the circumstances amplifying the venial sins.

The Third Pillar: On the Requisites and Perseverance of Repentance.

How past iniquities may be corrected, and transgression atoned; the categories of men[221] according to their perseverance in repentance.

The Fourth Pillar: On the Stimulus spurring Repentance and the way of Treatment for the Dissolution of the Knot of Persistence.

The goal of the exposition concerning these four pillars will be attained by God's will.

THE FIRST PILLAR: ON THE NATURE OF REPENTANCE

Explication of Repentance and its Definition

Repentance is a concept consisting of three successive and joined elements: knowledge, state [of remorse] and action. Knowledge is first, awareness second and action third.[222] The first necessitates the second, and the second necessitates the third, in accord with the continuity of the divine regimen in matters temporal and spiritual.

As for knowledge, it is the realization of the magnitude of the sin's harm and its being a barrier between man and the divine. If he realizes this with utter and decisive certainty, overwhelming his heart, this realization will stir a heartache on account of the Beloved eluding him. For the heart, whenever it perceives the withdrawal of the Beloved, is pained. If the withdrawal be through man's own action, he is regretful of that alienating behaviour. Such grief of the heart over behaviour alienating the Beloved is called Regret.

When this anguish becomes overpowering, another inner state is induced, termed volition and aspiration towards [new] behaviour connected with the present, the past, and the future. Its connection with the present consists of the repudiation of the sin with which he was entwined. For the future, it involves the determination to abandon forever the sin which causes alienation from the Beloved. With regard to the past, it entails correction of what was omitted by [doing] good and performing [the omitted act], if it is susceptible to [such] restoration.

Thus, knowledge is prerequisite and is the starting point of these blessings. By this knowledge I mean faith, and certitude. To have faith is to accept as true that Sins are a deadly poison. Certitude consists of the assurance of the acceptance of this truth, the removal of all doubt about it and finally its mastery over the heart, so that whenever the illumination of this Faith shines upon the heart it produces the fire of Regret.

It, in turn, will bring forth anguish as the heart perceives, through this illumination of the light of the faith, that it has become veiled from its Beloved. As one who was in darkness and on the verge of ruin, and, with the dispersal of clouds and the rending of a veil, the illumination of the sun shone and radiated upon him,[223] and he saw his Beloved. Then the flames of love burn in his heart and these flames flare up in his will to rise to correct his ways.

Knowledge, Regret, and the intent connected with abandonment [of sin] in the present and future, and correction of the [sin perpetrated in the] past are three successive concepts within this process. The term Penitence (*tawba*) refers to this totality. Frequently, the term Penitence is used for the concept of Regret alone, as if making knowledge a precondition, and abandonment a result and later consequence. It is in this sense that the Prophet said: 'Regret is Repentance,'[a] for Regret is void of knowledge which [4] necessitates and evokes it, and of determination which follows it. Regret is surrounded at both ends, by its result and its cause.

In this sense it is said, about Repentance as such that it is the melting of the entrails as a result of previous offense for this exposes to sheer agony. It is therefore said: /It is a fire raging in the heart, a fissure within that does not heal/. With respect to the meaning of Abandonment as an element of Repentance, it is related: It is the casting off of alienation and the start of fidelity.

Sahl ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Tustarī[224] has said: Repentance is the change from reprehensible acts to commendable acts. This can be accomplished only in solitude and silence, eating from that which is allowed [i.e., earning an honest livelihood]. He seems to have pointed to the third element of Repentance.

The sayings about Repentance are innumerable. Yet, if you have understood these three aspects in their junction and sequence you will know that all that has been said regarding it falls short of encompassing all its aspects. The search for the knowledge of the true essence is more important than the pursuit of mere verbalizations.

Explication of the Obligatoriness and Excellence of Repentance

Know, that the obligatoriness (*wujūb*) of repentance is evident in the Koran and the Tradition,[b] and it is manifest in the light of discernment to him whose discernment has developed and whose heart God has laid open to the light of faith, so that he is capable[225] of advancing in this light amidst the murk of ignorance, without need of someone directing[226] his every step.

A pilgrim (*sālik*), may be blind, and must have someone to direct his steps; or his vision may be good, and he will be guided[227] to the beginning of the way (*ṭarīq*) whence he will guide himself. In the way of religion, men are similarly divided. There is the limited type not able to transcend blind imitation (*taqlīd*) of past authority, and requiring, at each step, a text from God's Book or the tradition of His prophet, and in the absence of such a passage he may become perplexed, and, though he live long and be most diligent, such a man's progress may be limited, and his steps failing.

But then there is the fortunate man whose heart God has opened to an acceptance of Islam, and who is illumined by God. He will respond to the slightest indication to follow a difficult path and overcome tiresome obstacles. The light of the Koran and the Faith will glow in his heart, and, due to the intensity of his inner illumination, the slightest explanation will suffice him. IT IS AS IF HIS OIL WELLNIGH WOULD SHINE EVEN IF NO FIRE TOUCHED IT; and if THE FIRE TOUCHED IT THEN IT WOULD BE LIGHT UPON LIGHT. GOD GUIDES TO HIS LIGHT WHOM HE WILL.[228] Such a man has no need for a traditional text at every turn.

A person like that, if he desires to understand the obligation of repentance, examines, through the light of [his] discernment, what it the nature of repentance, then he scrutinizes what is the meaning of Obligation, then he combines these, and there will be no doubt as to his perseverance therein: To wit, he knows that the meaning of the obligatory is that which is obligatory for attainment of eternal bliss and deliverance from everlasting damnation. For unless happiness and misery are dependent[229] on some action or its omission, describing the act as being obligatory would be without meaning. The statement, 'it became obligatory by being given obligation [in some impersonal way]', is mere verbiage. For, in the case of an act where we have no purpose, near or distant, in doing it or leaving it undone and so no meaning in busying ourselves with it, someone else made it obligatory for us or did not make it obligatory.

If man understands the concept of obligation [of repentance], that it is the means to eternal bliss; that there is no bliss in the Hereafter except in encounter of God; that everyone barred therefrom is no doubt suffering, feeling separated from the object of his desire, and seared by the flame of separation and hellfire; that what keeps him away from encountering God is following the lusts and fondness for this ephemeral world

and the pursuit of affection for something with which he inevitably must part; that nothing can bring near the encounter with God except the severance of his heart's attachment to the vanity of this life, complete responsiveness to God, in search of intimacy with Him by constantly remembering Him and by love (*mahabba*) for Him, in the knowledge of His Majesty and Beauty, to the extent of man's capability; and that the transgressions which constitute turning from God and following the delights of the devils, those enemies of God that keep one away from His presence, are the cause of man's being shut off, kept out from [the presence] of God; then there is no doubt that renunciation of the path leading away [from God] is obligatory in order to achieve closeness to Him.

Renunciation, however, is achieved by Knowledge, Regret, and Determination. As long as man knows not that transgressions are the causes for the remoteness of the Beloved, he will neither regret nor grieve over his traveling on the path of withdrawal. As long as he has not grieved, he will not turn back, retreat being abandonment and determination. No doubt, these three elements are necessary in reaching [5] the Beloved, Such is then Faith that derives from the light of perception.

As for the [ordinary] man who is not qualified for such a station, whose climax transcends the bounds of most people, he has ample scope, through the following of convention and example, to attain salvation from damnation. Let him heed the word of God, His prophet and the righteous forebears (*salaf*).

God said, as a universal statement, BELIEVERS, TURN TO GOD [in repentance], HAPLY YOU MAY PROSPER;[230] and He said: O BELIEVERS, TURN TO GOD IN SINCERE REPENTANCE.[231] The meaning of 'sincere' in the verse is 'sincere with God', free of blemish, the word being derived[232] from 'sincere counsel'. Further, God's word points out the excellence of repentance. TRULY GOD LOVES PENITENTS AND THOSE THAT CLEANSE THEMSELVES.[233]

The Prophet said: 'The Penitent is beloved unto God, and he who repents of sin is as one who has never sinned.'[a] He also said: 'God is happier with the repentance of His faithful servant than the man [about whom the following story is related].

'Accompanied by his camel which bore his food and drink, he came to an arid desert. He laid down his head and napped. He awoke and his camel was gone. He searched for it until the heat and thirst overcame him, et cetera. He said, I will return whence I started and sleep until I die. He proceeded to place his head upon his arm so as to die. Then,

he was aroused, and lo, his camel stood before him, provisions intact. God's joy at the repentance of the faithful servant is more intense than that of the man on account of his camel.'[a] (Some versions have it that in his great joy and desirous of thanking God, he exclaimed: 'I am your master and you are my servant.')

It has been transmitted on the authority of Hasan [al-Basri]: When God forgave Adam, the angels congratulated him. Gabriel and Michael descended to him and said: 'O Adam, may you delight in God's forgiveness!' Adam replied: 'O Gabriel, if a question remains after this pardon, what is my standing?' God, then, revealed to him: 'O Adam, you have bequeathed your descendants toil and hardship but also repentance. Whosoever of them shall call upon Me, I shall respond to him as I did to you. Whosoever shall seek pardon, I shall not withhold it from him, for I am nigh and responsive! O Adam, I shall gather up the penitents from their graves happy and laughing, their supplication answered.'

There are innumerable traditions on the subject, and there exists within the community a general consensus as to the obligatoriness [of penitence]. For its meaning is the recognition that sins and iniquities are destructive and remove Man from God. This sense is part and parcel of the obligatoriness of Faith. At times, however, disregard of it may occur. Knowledge means the elimination of this disregard. There is no doubt of the obligatory nature of repentance.

Among the various aspects of repentance are the abandonment of iniquities in the present; resolve to abstain in the future; correction of previous shortcomings. Of the obligation of these there is no doubt. As for regret and sadness of past offenses, surely this is obligatory. It is the very spirit of repentance which includes full rectification. How could this not be obligatory? Nay, it is a sort of pain one suffers following the realization of how much of lifetime has passed away and was wasted in the wrath of God.

You might say:

Heart anguish is a necessary state about which one has no choice. How then can it be classified as an obligation?

Know, then, that such anguish is caused by the certainty of having missed the Beloved. Man has a path by which to grasp its cause. In this sense, knowledge can be classified as obligatory. It cannot, however, be understood as a self-induced creation of man, for this would be absurd. Rather, Knowledge, Regret, Action, Volition, Capacity and the carrier are all creations and deeds of God. GOD HAS CREATED YOU AND

[ALL] THAT YOU DO.[234] This is what men of insight[235] consider true, and all else is wrong.

You might also ask:

Has man, then, no choice in action and abandonment?

This we must answer in the affirmative. Yet this does not contradict our previous statement that everything stems from God's creation. So, also, does choice. Man is compelled in that choice which is his.

Indeed when God created the right hand, [6] delicious food and the appetite for food in the stomach, He also created the innate awareness that this food would alleviate the craving. He also produced the opposing notions: does or does not this food, while alleviating the craving, also contain harm and, perhaps, there is some objection to it, making its consumption objectionable. Further He created the knowledge that there is no obstacle. When these factors converge, there emerges a resolve motivating consumption. The emergence of the resolve, then, after vacillating between contradictory notions, and following on the intense[236] appetite for the food, is called choice. It is inevitable that it should set in upon the convergence of all these conditions. Then, as resolve emerges through God's creation of these conditions, the right hand duly rises towards the food. For after volition and ability are attained, the following of the act is necessary so that the movement is produced. Thus the movement is by God's creation, following the attainment of ability and the emergence of the resolve, both also of divine creation. The emergence of volition follows real appetite and the recognition that there are no objections, again by divine creation. But some of these creations follow others in an order habitual in divine creation. YOU SHALL NOT FIND FOR THE WAY OF GOD AUGHT OF CHANGE.[237]

God does not create the movement of the hand in orderly writing so long as He has not created in the hand the quality of capacity, life and emerging will. Nor does He create a firm resolve as long as He has not brought forth desire and inclination in the soul. This inclination is not fully induced until there is knowledge that it suits the soul either immediately or ultimately. Knowledge, also, comes about only by other elements going back to movement, will and knowledge. Knowledge and natural disposition, then, always entail firm resolve. Movement always follows power and resolve. Such is the order of each action. All of it derives from divine origination.

Some of His creations, however, are preconditions of others and, therefore, some will have to precede others, e.g., will appears only after knowledge, which comes only with life, which emerges only after the

creation of the body. The creation of the body is, therefore, requisite for the incidence of life but not in the sense that life is generated from the body. Likewise, the creation of life is a condition for the creation of knowledge, but not in the sense that knowledge is born of life. Yet, there is no ready receptacle for knowledge except it be alive. The creation of knowledge is then a requisite for the emerging resolve but not in the sense that knowledge engenders resolve. But only a live and knowing body is receptive of a state of volition.

Nothing is included in Existence except that which is possible, and possibility is an ordained order which does not tolerate change, for such would be an absurdity. As soon as the precondition of a quality exists, the carrier endowed with it is created to receive the quality. This quality, then, is attained through divine grace and eternal power, once the disposition has set in. Inasmuch as the disposition, on account of the preconditions, has [pre-ordained] order, the flow, by God's directives, of events has a set order, and Man, then, is the arena of these divinely pre-ordained successive events. These events are regulated by divine decree, which is as the twinkling of an eye,[238] in a universal and unchangeable order. Their manifestation[239] is so predestined in detail that man cannot transcend them. This is expressed in the divine saying, WE HAVE CREATED ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO A FIXED DECREE,[240] and concerning the absolute and eternal decree in the verse, WE HAVE COMMANDED BUT ONE WORD, AS THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE.[241]

Men are subject to the flow of fate and divine decree. Part of destiny is the creation of the movement in the hand of the writer[242] after the creation of a special quality in the hand which quality is termed capacity. This follows the introduction of a strong and definite inclination, called Intent, in man's soul. This succeeds knowledge of the object of his inclination, which is called Awareness and Perception.

When, from the hidden reaches of the invisible world,[243] these four elements appear upon the person of a man, who is subject to the compulsion of fate, the people of the visible world, barred as they are from the invisible and sublime world, come and say: O man, you who have moved, aimed and written. But proclaimed from behind the veil of the transcendental and the whirlwind of majesty, it has been announced: When you have aimed it is not you that has aimed but God. When you have killed, it is not you that has done it.[244] But, BATTLE THEM, GOD CHASTIES THEM AT YOUR HANDS.[245]

The minds of those sitting in the middle of the sensible world are there

upon sorely confused. Some teach utter predestination (*jabr*). Some maintain pure indeterminism (*ikhtirā' ṣirf*). Yet others mediate and tend towards the theory of acquisition (*kasb*). If the gates of heaven were opened to them and they looked into the transcendental world, it would become apparent to them that each one is right in a sense, and yet all share in failure, and not one of them had fathomed the matter in all its aspects. Complete perception of it is attained by illumination through an aperture reaching into the invisible world. God knows the hidden world and the manifest. He reveals this hidden realm only to such a messenger with whom He is well-pleased.[246] The manifest may be perceived [7] by one who has not come within the scope of [His] satisfaction. To him, who sets into motion the chain of causes and results, and knows the manner of its sequence and the nature of its connection to the primal cause, the secret of destiny is disclosed, and he acquires certainty that there is no creator and originator save for God.

If you say: you have concluded that each of these respective advocates of predestination, free will and acquisition is correct, to some degree, but also falls short of truth, are you not positing a contradiction? How can such a situation be understood? Is it possible to explain this through a parable?

A group of blind men heard that a strange animal, called an elephant, had been brought to the town but none of them had seen its shape nor had they heard its name. They said: 'We must inspect and know it by touch of which we are capable.' So, they sought it out, and when they found it they groped about it. One of them grasped its leg,[247] another its tusk and the third its ear. Then they said: 'Now we know it.' When[248] they departed, the other blind men questioned them but the three differed in their answers. The one who felt the leg said: 'The elephant is similar to a coarse cylinder outside although it appears to be softer than that.' The one who had felt the tusk said: 'It is not as he says. It is solid without any softness on it. It is smooth, not coarse. It is not at all stiff but rather it resembles a column.' The third man, who had handled the ear, said: 'By my life, it is soft and somewhat coarse. One of them is right but it is not like a column or a cylinder. It is rather, like broad, thick hide.'

Now, each of these presented a true aspect when he related what he had gained from experiencing the elephant. None of them had strayed from the true description of the elephant. Yet, together, they fell short of fathoming the true appearance of the elephant. Ponder this parable and learn from it. It is the pattern of most human controversies. If these

words touch the revealed sciences and provoke ripples therein, this was not our intention.

Let us, then, return to our present concern, i.e., the explanation that repentance with all its three divisions: Knowledge, Regret and Renunciation is obligatory. Regret comes within the scope of obligatoriness as this occurs in all of God's actions that are interposed between man's knowledge and his will and power. That which answers this description is included in the term 'obligatoriness'.

Explication that Promptness is [essential in fulfilling] the Obligation of Repentance

No one doubts that promptness if [essential in fulfilling] this obligation, since perception of sins' destructiveness is of the essence of faith (*īmān*), which is immediately obligatory. Its obligatoriness is profoundly grasped by him whom this keeps from reprehensible action. Indeed this perception is not of the revealed disciplines (*'ulūm al-mukāshafāt*) which are independent of action. Rather, it is of the sciences of practical religion (*'ulūm al-mu'āmala*).[249] Every [item of] knowledge that is intended to be a stimulus to action has not been fully perceived as long as it has not become such a stimulus. The knowledge of sins' harm was intended to be a stimulus to renouncing them. He, then, who has not abandoned sin is failing in this part of faith. Such is the intent of the Prophet's saying: 'The adulterer does not fornicate at the time of fornication, he being a believer.'[a]

His intent in [this saying] was not the denial of the faith which pertains to the revealed disciplines, such as knowledge of God['s existence], His unity, His attributes, His scriptures and Apostles. Indeed, adultery and transgression do not preclude that. Rather, he thereby meant denial of the belief that adultery alienates [one] from God and leads to abomination. It is similar to a situation where the physician says: 'This is poison, do not take it.' If the patient then takes it, it can be said [that] he took it as a non-believer. [This is meant] not in the sense that he lacks belief in the existence of the physician or in his being a physician. Neither [does it indicate] the patient's distrust of the physician. Rather, what is meant is that the patient distrusts the physician's statement that the compound is a lethal toxin. Indeed, he who knows [the nature of] the toxin will not take it at all.

The sinner, of necessity, lacks in faith. Faith is not one variety but rather some seventy whose highest point is the creed (*shahāda*) that there is only one God, and whose lowest point is the removal of harm from

the path. It is similar to the saying: Man is not one creature but rather some seventy whose highest is the heart and spirit, and whose lowest is keeping harm from the outer skin so that the mustache will be shaven, the nails cut and the skin free [8] of scum so that he is set apart from the beasts soiled by their detestable dung, with their long claws and hooves. This is a fitting simile.

Faith is similar to man. The loss of the affirmation of [God's] unity produces total futility like the loss of the spirit. He who has nothing save the affirmation of God's unity and of [Muḥammad's] mission is like a man whose limbs are cut off, whose eyes have burst, and who has lost all his organs, both internal and external, except[250] the spiritual element.

Just as he, who is in this condition, is close to death, the weak and solitary spirit, bereft of the limbs which support it and give it strength, abandoning him, so, he who being deficient in works, has naught save the root of faith is near to having the [whole] tree of his faith uprooted when, preceding the approach and arrival of the Angel of Death, the tempest which dislocates faith strikes the tree.

Any faith that is not firmly rooted in certitude nor branched out in action will not withstand the stormy terror of the Angel of Death, and may be in danger of an evil end, unlike faith that is tempered continuously with pious deeds until faith is firmly anchored.

The statement of the defiant to the obedient [servant]: 'I am a believer just as you are a believer,' is like the statement of the pumpkin tree to the stone pine: 'I am a tree and you are a tree.' How apt was the pine's retort when it said: 'When the autumn winds blow you will surely realize your foolishness in including [us both under the same] nomenclature, for then your roots will be severed, your leaves will fall away, and your conceit in sharing the name 'tree', as well as your heedlessness of the conditions of a tree's stability, will be made apparent.'

When the dust settles, you will see,
If it's a horse you're riding, or an ass.

This matter will become apparent at the end. The arteries of people of perception collapse in fear of the vicissitudes of death and its terrible foreshadowing which only very few will withstand.

The sinner, when undaunted by the consequence of his disobedience, eternal hellfire, is like the healthy man who, addicted to injurious passions, is not, while in his healthy state, afraid of death. Indeed death does not usually occur suddenly. He may be told: 'The healthy man fears sickness, then, if he takes ill he hears death. So, the sinner fears a bad end, then, when, God forbid, his end is bad, he is consigned to eternal hellfire'.

Sins are to faith what toxic foods are to the body. They keep accumulating inside [the body] until the component elements change, imperceptibly, until the composition deteriorates and suddenly the man falls ill, then, suddenly, dies. So it is with the sinner. If a man afraid of ruination in this passing world must, immediately and constantly, abandon toxic substances and harmful foods, so too, and even more so must he who fears eternal perdition.

If a man who consumed poison, then felt regret, would need vomit and discontinue the consumption of poison by invalidating and removing it from the stomach in the quickest manner, to save his body which is on the verge of death, the loss merely of this ephemeral world, then, he who consumes what is toxic to religion, that is commits sins, is even more obliged to desist from these sins by correcting whatever is possible so long as there remains time for correction, namely [the remainder of his] lifetime.

For, what is feared from this toxin is the loss of everlasting life which contains lasting bliss and the great kingdom;[251] its loss entails the fire of Hell and lasting chastisement which is such as multiples of life in this world are less than one tenth of a tenth of its duration, it having no end at all.

Hurry, hurry, then, to repent before the toxic sins do their work on the spirit of faith, and the matter will transcend physicians and their knowledge.[252] After which seeking shelter will avail naught nor will counsel and admonition, and man may be said to be among the damned, as it says: SURELY WE HAVE PUT ON THEIR NECKS FETTERS UPTO THE CHIN, SO THAT THEY ARE MADE STIFF NECKED; AND WE HAVE PUT BEFORE THEM A BARRIER AND BEHIND THEM A BARRIER; AND WE HAVE COVERED THEM, SO THEY DO NOT SEE. IT IS ALIKE WHETHER OR NOT YOU FOREWARN THEM, THEY DO NOT BELIEVE.[253]

Do not be deluded by the word 'faith'. We say the verse pertains to the unbeliever. Since it has been explained to you that faith is of some seventy varieties, and that 'the adulterer does not fornicate being a believer',[254] he then who is barred from faith which is bough and branch, will be barred, in the end, from that faith which is the root. Just as the man who, bereft of limbs, which are the branches, will be led to final death of that spirit (*rūḥ*) which is the root. But the root has no continuity without the branch, [9] nor has the branch existence without

the root. There is no difference between the root and the branch except in one point: the existence and continuity of the branch requires the existence of the root while the existence of the root does not require the existence of the branch. The continuity of the root, then, lies in the branch, and the branch draws its existence from the root.

Likewise the revealed discipline and the disciplines of practical religion are as inseparable as the root and branch. Neither can dispense with the other even though one of them has a primary status and the other is secondary. If the disciplines of practical religion have not become a stimulus to action, their non-existence is preferable to their existence. If they have not carried out their intended function, they turn into a support for the case against their student. Therefore, the chastisement of the learned but immoral is greater than that of the immoral ignoramus, as can be seen from the Traditions we cited in the Book of Knowledge.[255]

On the Universality of the Obligation of Repentance, no one being free of it

Know that the actual text of the Koran has already indicated this: BELIEVERS, TURN TO GOD [in repentance], HAPLY YOU MAY PROSPER.[256] Thus He made the address universal (i.e., He addressed *all* believers). The light of the mind[257] also advises so, as the meaning of repentance is the retreat from the road which leads away from God and draws [man] nigh unto Satan. That is conceived only by one endowed with reason.

The natural disposition of the intellect is fulfilled only after the fullness of the instincts of desire, anger and the rest of the negative qualities which are Satan's instruments for the enticement of man.

For the perfection of the intellect comes at the age of about forty; its foundation becomes complete only at puberty and its rudiments appear at the age of seven.

The passions are the soldiers of Satan, and the minds those of the angels. When they come together combat is, of necessity, joined between them, as one does not yield to the other, they being adversaries.

The strife between them is like the struggle between night and day, light and darkness. Whenever the one gains ascendancy, the other is, necessarily, roused. If the desires mature during childhood or adolescence, before the perfection of the intellect, then the satanic forces have preceded and mastered the situation. Familiarity and intimacy with Satan befall the heart, no doubt, as usual requisites of the desires. This overcomes man and makes it difficult to abstain therefrom. Then the intellect,

which is God's troop and force, emerges to save, gradually, those favoured by God, from the hands of His enemies. But if the mind is not strong and perfected, the kingdom of the heart is surrendered to Satan, and the Evil One carried out his promises: I SHALL VERILY MASTER HIS PROGENY, SAVE A FEW.[258] But if the intellect is perfected and strengthened, its first occupation is to suppress the satanic forces by breaking the appetites and habits and by forcefully reverting the natural disposition to acts of worship. Only this is the meaning of repentance. It is the return, from that road whose guide is lust and whose sentry is Satan, to God's path.

In every human being passion prevails over intellect; the impulse which is a device of Satan prevails over the impulse which is an instrument of the angels. Prophet or fool, every human being must abandon the steps taken to promote desire. On no account should you suppose that this is peculiar to Adam. It has been said:

Do not suppose that only Hind [shows] treachery
as a personal temper.
Every songstress is like Hind.

Rather, it is an eternal rule, the fate of humankind which no decree can alter so long as there is no variance in the immutable divine order.

Consequently, anyone who has come of age as an ignorant unbeliever must repent his ignorance and unbelief. If he has come of age as a Muslim, following his parents, yet negligent of the real meaning of Islam, he must repent his negligence by a [growing] comprehension of the meaning of Islam. Indeed, his parents' Islam is of no avail to him so long as he himself does not turn Muslim. If he has understood that, then he must turn from his practice and propensity for following the desires, without anyone to divert him, and turn toward the pattern of the divinely set limits in prevention, release, absolution and renunciation. This is of the hardest varieties of repentance, and it is the ruin of most, as they fail therein. All this is retreat and repentance. It points to [the fact] that repentance is an individual duty of every person. It is unimaginable that anybody can be exempt from it, as Adam was not either. The constitution of the progeny cannot accommodate that which the original constitution of the progenitor could not.

As for the explanation of the constancy and universality of this obligation, it is [10] that no man is free from sins by his limbs; for even the prophets were not free of them, as is mentioned in the Koran and Traditions about the sins of the prophets: how the prophets bemoaned

and repented them. If a man, in some cases, is free of sin by commission, he is not free of thinking about sin in his mind. If he is free, sometimes, from such thought, he is not free of satanic temptation by instigation of sporadic thoughts distracting from invoking God's name. But even if he is free therefrom, he would not be free of heedlessness and shortcoming in the knowledge of God, His attributes and acts. All this is an imperfection which has its causes. Abandonment of its causes, by taking to their opposites, is a turning from a path to one leading in the opposite direction. The intent of repentance is [such a] turning.

Freedom from this imperfection, in humans is inconceivable but they differ as to the extent of imperfection. Yet, basically there is no escape from it. That is why the Prophet said: 'Verily my heart is beclouded so that I beg forgiveness of God seventy times in a day.'[a] God therefore honoured him, as it says: THAT GOD MAY FORGIVE YOU THAT WHICH HAS PRECEDED OF SIN AND THAT WHICH SHALL FOLLOW.[259] If such was the case of the Prophet, what could another person expect?

Perhaps you would assert:

It is obvious that the concerns and thoughts that overtake the heart are a blemish, and that perfection consists of freedom from them; further, that the defective cognition of the essence of God's sublimity is a deficiency, and as cognition grows, so does perfection increase; that the transition from the sphere of deficiency toward perfection is also a turning away and that turning away is repentance. These, however, are virtues not [religious] precepts. You have made a statement on the obligatoriness of repentance under all conditions. Yet, repentance of these matters is not obligatory, as the attainment of perfection is not obligatory under Islamic law. What then is intended by your statement: 'Repentance is obligatory under all conditions'?

Know, as it has already been stated, that basically, by his very nature, man cannot but follow his desires. The meaning of repentance is not merely their abandonment. Rather, full repentance includes the correction of that which has passed. From each desire that a man pursues, a darkness rises onto his heart, as a dark spot is picked up from man's breath by the surface of a polished mirror. If the darkness of the desires accumulates, it forms a stain, as the gathering vapour of breath becomes dross on the surface[260] of the mirror. As the Koran said: NO INDEED, BUT THAT WHICH THEY WERE EARNING HAS RUSTED UPON THEIR HEARTS.[261]

When the rust collects it becomes characteristic and it is imprinted

onto the heart like the dross on the surface of the mirror when the dross accumulates over a long time, becomes immersed in the iron and corrupts it: the metal will not take further polishing, and becomes imprinted with the slag.

In correcting [the results] of following the appetites it is not enough to abandon them in the future. It is necessary to wipe out those stains that impressed themselves upon the heart. Likewise, the future elimination of breath and vapor that darken the mirror's surface will not suffice for clear reflection in the mirror, as long as no effort was made to wipe out the stain that had imprinted itself in the mirror.

Just as darkness will arise onto the heart from [the commission] of sins and [the pursuit of] appetites, so a light will arise upon it from [acts of] obedience and abstention from the appetites. The darkness of sin will, then, be eradicated by the light of obedience. This is alluded to in the Prophet's saying: 'Follow an evil deed with a good deed, to wipe it out.'[a] Consequently, in any given situation, man will not be free of the need to eliminate from his heart the traces of evil by pursuit of pious deeds, the influence of [the good] contravening the effects of those evil deeds. This [refers to] a heart which has first had its purity and clarity, and then became dark due to obstructive factors. As for the initial burnishing, it is a protracted affair, because polishing to remove rust from the mirror is unlike the initial work of producing the mirror. Such operations are long lasting, never ceasing at all. All this applies to repentance.

As for your statement that this cannot be called obligatory, but is rather a virtue and search for perfection, know, then, that [the term] 'obligatory' has two meanings. One of them is: that which falls within the terms of a legal decision and which applies to all the people. It is the measure with which, if all mankind were to observe it, the world would not be destroyed. If all men were truly bent on fearing God, they would abandon [the pursuit] of livelihood and would forsake the world totally. That would lead to the total nullity of piety. For whenever livelihood is impaired, no one has the leisure for piety. Rather, occupation in weaving [11] and cultivation and [baking] bread absorbs everyone's[262] life totally, according to his needs. From this point of view none of these stages (i.e., of freedom from sinful thought and the quest for perfection) is obligatory.

The second [meaning of] the obligatory is: that which is essential for attaining the sought after proximity to God and the good abode among the righteous. Repentance from all we have mentioned [of sins] is neces-

sary to attain it. As it is said: [Cultic] purity (*ṭahāra*) is obligatory for a voluntary prayer for anybody who desires it. Indeed, he will not come by it without that purity. On the other hand, for him who is satisfied with the omission of and preclusion from the virtue of voluntary service, purity, on its account, is not obligatory.

This [conforms to] what has been said: The eye, ear, hand and leg are a requisite for the existence of man. That is to say, it is a requisite for him who desires to be a complete man, enjoying his humanity and seeking thereby to attain to the noblest rank in this world. But he who is content with basic life and is satisfied to be like meat on the block and like a cast off rag, [finds] that for such a life the eye, hand and foot are not requisite. The root of the obligations, which enter the general mandate, bring one merely to the root of salvation. The root of salvation is like the root of life. The bliss beyond the root of salvation which shapes[263] life flows through the limbs and tools by which life perfection[264] is being prepared. It is this that the prophets, the saints, and the scholars sought, each according to his rank. That was their aspiration, their quest, and it is for this that they totally rejected the pleasures of this world.

Jesus came to rest his head on a stone to sleep. Satan then came to him and said: 'Were you not [resolved] to forsake this world for the next?' Jesus answered: 'Yes. What now?' Satan said: 'Your use of this rock as a pillow is a worldly enjoyment. Why do you not place your head on the ground?' Jesus cast away the stone, and placed his head on the ground. His casting off of the rock was [in] penance of that [worldly] enjoyment. Are you, then, of the opinion that Jesus did not know that placing [one's] head on the ground is not, by general mandate, considered obligatory?

Do you further think that our Prophet Muḥammad, when the design on the garment he had on distracted him from his prayer until he removed the garment;[a] or when the lace of his shoe, which was new, distracted him until he replaced it with an old one,[b] did not know that such is not obligatory, according to the revelation he brought to all mankind?[265] And, if he knew that, why did he repent through abstention from his deeds? Was that not because he saw [the amenities] acting upon his heart [in such a way as to] prevent him from reaching the good state which had been promised him?

And Abū Bakr, after he had drunk some milk and was informed that it was improper, inserting his finger in his throat, gagging almost to the point of death, so as to bring [the milk] up. Do you think that he was

so unaware of the rule of [Islamic] law by which anything eaten [of improper food] through ignorance [of its state], is not [an object of] guilt, and the food need not, according to jurisprudential mandate, be evacuated? Then why did he repent his drinking, by attempting, to the best of his ability, to empty his stomach of it? Was it not the conscience embedded within him which informed him that the general mandate is one thing and that the gravity of the path to the next world is [another] known only by the righteous?

Contemplate the state of these who, of God's creation, are most cognizant of God, of His path, of His scheme and of the hiding places of the Deluder. Beware lest the life of this world should delude you even once. Beware, beware a million times of the Deluder's guile concerning God. These are mysteries. He, who sniffs them out early, knows that the need of sincere repentance with every breath, clings to the man who is a pilgrim (*sālik*) on God's path, even if he live as long as Noah. He also knows that this (repentance) is obligatory forthwith and with no delay.

Indeed, Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī[266] has spoken truthfully when he said: If the sensible man cried in what is left of his life only over what he missed in breach of piety, this would be apt to grieve him unto death. How is it then for him who faces the remainder of his life with [behaviour] similar to that of his past ignorance? He said this because if the sensible man possessed a precious gem and it was lost senselessly, certainly he would cry over it; if its loss were the cause of his own destruction, his weeping would be yet greater. Each hour of life, nay each breath, is a precious stone for which there is no substitute or exchange; it is beneficial for it is leading you to eternal bliss and saving you from endless misery. Which gem[267] is more precious than this? If you have lost it through negligence, you have suffered patent damage and if you have expended it in sin [12] then you have already perished repugnantly. If you do not weep over this sin it is because of your ignorance. Your misfortune through ignorance is greater than any other. Ignorance, however, is a calamity in which the one stricken is unaware of his misfortune.

Indeed, heedless slumber intervenes between man and his perception. Men are asleep, but when they die they awaken. At that time to every wretch his destitution is revealed, and to every afflicted person his misfortune. Yet correction is already out of their reach.

One of the mystics has said: If the Angel of Death appeared to a man and informed him, 'there remains one hour to your life, and you cannot be reprieved for even one moment,' the man would experience such

sorrow and grief, that if the whole world were all his, he would [be ready to] leave it for another hour to be added, just to enable him to seek God's pleasure and correct his own remissness. He will, however, find no way to accomplish this. This is the first meaning to appear from the divine word: AND A BARRIER IS SET BETWEEN THEM AND THAT WHICH THEY DESIRE.[268] Further, this is indicated by the words: . . . BEFORE DEATH COMES UNTO ONE OF YOU AND HE SAYS; O MY LORD! IF ONLY THOU WOULDST REPRIEVE ME, AWHILE, SO THAT I MIGHT MAKE FREE WILL OFFERING AND BE AMONG THE RIGHTEOUS. BUT GOD REPRIEVES NO SOUL WHEN ITS TERM IS ENDED.[269]

It has been said that the meaning of the 'awhile' that the man requests [according to the verse], is that when the matter is disclosed to him, man says: 'O Angel of Death, grant me an additional day, to plead to be excused by God, repent and provide a good record for my soul.' But the Angel replies: 'The days have come to an end, there is, then, not [a] day.' The man: 'Then reprieve me for an hour.' The Angel: 'The hours have lapsed; no hour!'

The gate of repentance is then closed to man, he gags, breathes heavily in his bitter regret. He suffers the agony of despair about correction, and bitter sorrow over the waste of his lifetime. The very foundation of his faith will be [surely] shaken under these blows.

When a man dies in God's grace, his soul expires with the words of the creed, and that [is to be considered] the good end. If he, God forbid, is doomed to wretchedness, he expires in doubt and confusion, and that is a bad end. In this regard it is said: BUT GOD SHALL NOT TURN TOWARDS THOSE WHO DO EVIL DEEDS UNTIL, WHEN ONE OF THEM IS VISITED BY DEATH, HE SAYS, 'INDEED NOW I REPENT.'[270] And, again, GOD SHALL TURN ONLY TOWARDS THOSE WHO DO EVIL IN IGNORANCE, THEN SHORTLY REPENT.[271]

'Shortly' refers to temporal proximity to the offense, so that he repent it and erase any trace of it through good works, substituting such for [the bad] before a stain beyond removal can collect upon the heart. Of this the Prophet has said: Follow an evil deed with a good deed, [may one] eliminate the other.

Of this, again, Luqmān[272] said to his son: 'My son, do not delay repentance for death comes suddenly. He who has put off the effort to repentance finds himself between the two great perils: one of them being that darkness,brought on by his sins, will collect upon his heart until it becomes deeply embedded grime beyond elimination; the other that sickness or death may befall him swiftly, without permitting time to engage in correction.' That is why Tradition has it that 'most of the cries from those consigned to hellfire result from procrastination.'[a] It is this that accounts for perdition. Blackening of the heart is cash while purging it by obedient action is credit, until death snatches man, and he brings before God an impaired heart. But only he is saved who brings before God a sound heart.

The heart is a trust left by God with man. So is a lifetime. So are the other means of worship. he who breaches this trust and does not make amends is in sore peril.

A mystic has said: Indeed, God has entrusted[273] to man, through inspiration, two secrets. Firstly, when man exits his mother's womb God says to him: 'My servant, I have brought you into the world clean and pure, and have consigned you life and entrusted it to you. Heed how you keep this trust safe, and consider how you shall encounter Me [later].' Secondly, at the time of death He says: 'Man, what have you done with my trust? Have you kept it safe until you found Me under the covenant, so that I find you faithful? Or, have you forfeited it, so that I meet you with claim and punishment?' This is alluded to in the verse: . . . FULFILL MY COVENANT AND I SHALL FULFILL YOUR COVENANT,[274] and in the verse: . . . AND WHO PROTECT THEIR TRUSTS AND COVENANT.[275]

[13] *Upon Accumulation of its Requisites, Repentance is surely accepted*

If you have understood the concept of acceptance you will not doubt that every correct repentance is accepted. Those who contemplate through the illumination derived from the lights of the Koran know that every sound heart is received well by God, is enjoying in the next world nearness to God, and its master, through his immortal eye, is prepared to perceive God's countenance. They also know that, originally, the heart was created sound, every creature being born with such a nature. This soundness, however, eludes man because of a murkiness which overcomes the surface of his heart from the pollution and darkness of sins.

They are aware that the fire of regret [can] burn this pollution, and that the light of good deeds [can] obliterate the darkness of evil from the heart's surface, and that the darkness of transgressions has no power against the light of pious acts, just as the gloom of night is helpless in the face of the light of day; nay, just as the turbidity of filth cannot exist

with the whiteness of soap, and as a king would not accept a dirty garment as his attire, so God does not admit a darkened heart into His proximity. And, just as the use of a garment for vile labor will soil it, and, certainly, to clean it one needs to wash it with soap and warm water, so exposure of the heart to the desires fouls it, and to clean, purge and purify it, one needs to wash it in the flow of tears and the burning of regret. Every clean and pure heart is well received, just as every clean garment is. The purification and cleansing, however, are up to you.

As for acceptance (*qabūl*), it is freely granted as irrevocably preordained. This is termed 'prosperity' in the verse: PROSPEROUS IS HE WHO PURIFIES IT.[276]

He who does not know, strictly speaking, with a perception greater and clearer than that achieved through eyesight, that the heart is affected contrarily by sins and good deeds, using for the former, the metaphor 'darkness' (*ẓalām*) [as it is used also for ignorance] and for the latter, the metaphor 'illumination' (*nūr*) [as used also for knowledge]; and that between illumination and darkness there exists a necessary unbridgeable contradiction; then he is as one to whom only the husk of religion was left with nothing attached save appellations. His heart is in a dense wrap [barred] from the essence of religion, nay even from his own essence and attributes. But he who is ignorant of himself, surely is yet more ignorant of another. I refer, in this, to his heart. Since knowledge of another [lies] within his heart, how can he have [such] knowledge when of his own heart he has no knowledge?

He who fancies that repentance could be sound yet not accepted is like him who imagines that the sun will rise but the darkness persist, or that a garment will be laundered with soap but the dirt will persist. Unless it be that lengthy accumulation of filth penetrated into the interstices of the garment and spoiled it so that the soap will lack the strength to extricate it. Likewise the accumulation of sins may become stained and imprinted upon the heart. Such a heart cannot return and repent.

Certainly, at times, a man says, with his tongue, 'I have repented.' Yet, that is like the fuller saying, with his tongue [alone], 'I have cleaned the garment.' But this will never clean the garment so long as he does not change the disposition of the garment by use of something effective against the filth[277] ingrained in it. In this case repentance is fundamentally impossible. This is not rare but rather prevailing among all those creatures who devote themselves to this world and completely renounce God.

This explanation of the acceptance of repentance should be sufficient

for men of discernment. But we shall support it by quoting verses, traditions and sayings of the Companions, for any reflection not attested to by the Book and the [apostolic] tradition (*sunna*) is not reliable.

The Koran says: IT IS HE WHO ACCEPTS REPENTANCE FROM HIS SERVANTS, AND PARDONS EVIL DEEDS.[278] He also said: FORGIVER OF SINS, ACCEPTER OF REPENTANCE.[279] Of such verses there are many more.

The Prophet said: 'God rejoices in the repentance of [even] one of you. . . . Joy is behind acceptance, and it points to acceptance and more than that.' The Prophet also said: 'Indeed, God extends His hand with repentance until morning to him who sins at night, and to him who sins during the day He extends His hand until nightfall.'[a] Extension of the hand amounts to a call for repentance and the [attribute of] seeker is behind [the attribute of] accepter. Many are the receivers who do not seek but one does not seek unless he is [willing to] accept.

The Prophet said: 'If you sinned until it reached the heaven, then repented, surely God would turn unto you.'[b] He also said: 'Indeed a man can commit a sin [14] and enter paradise with it.' He was asked: 'How can this be, O Apostle of God?' He replied: 'He will direct his attention to repent it, fleeing [from sin] until he enters paradise.'[c] The Prophet said: 'The expiation of sin is repentance.'[d] And: 'He who repents of sin is like one who has never sinned.'

It is related that an Abyssinian [came before the Prophet and] said: 'O Apostle of God, I used to commit vile deeds, do I have [a chance] of repentance?' 'Yes,' replied [the Prophet]. [The Abyssinian] turned away and then returned saying: 'O Apostle of God, did He see me when I committed them?' Again, 'yes.' [At this point] the man uttered a shout with which his soul departed.[e]

It is related that when God damned Iblīs, the devil asked for a reprieve. God, then, granted him a stay until the Day of Resurrection. [Iblis] said: 'By Your glory, may I not leave the heart of the son of Adam so long as he lives.' [To this] God replied: 'By My glory and majesty, may I not bar repentance from [man] so long as he lives.'[f]

The Prophet said: 'Good works remove evil as water [washes away] dirt.[g]

The traditions in this matter are too numerous to mention.[280]

As for the sayings of the Companions:

Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab[281] said: God's revealed word, . . . INDEED HE IS FORGIVING OF THOSE THAT RETURN,[282] [refers] to man: he sins, repents, sins and repents again.

Al-Fuḍayl[283] said: God has said: 'Announce to the sinners that if they repent I will accept their penitence. Caution the righteous that if I applied to them My justice, I would punish them.'

Ṭalq b. Ḥabīb said: God's claims [upon man] are greater than man's capability; yet repent day and night.

'Abdullāh b. 'Umar[284] said:[285] If a man bears in mind an offense he perpetrated, then is afraid in his heart on account of that offense, then that sin is erased from the [celestial] Register.

It is related that one of the prophets of the Children of Israel sinned. God, then, revealed to him: 'By My glory, if indeed you do it again, I shall chastise you.' The prophet replied: 'O my God, Thou art Thou and I am I. By Your majesty, if You do not grant me immunity I will surely do it again.' Thereupon God granted him immunity.

One said: If a man sins and does not cease to regret it until he enters paradise, Iblīs says: 'Would that I had not plunged him into sin.'

Ḥabīb b. Thābit said: A man is confronted with his sins on the Day of Resurrection. Then he passes by a sin and says, 'Verily, I was afraid of it.' That man is forgiven.

It is recounted that a man asked Ibn Mas'ūd[286] about a sin he committed: did he have a chance of repentance? Ibn Mas'ūd turned away from him, then turned back and saw tears flowing from his eyes. Ibn Mas'ūd said to the man: 'Indeed paradise has eight gates which open and close but the gate of repentance, guarded by a special angel, does not close; do [repent], and do not despair.'

'Abd ar-Raḥmān b. Abī-l-Qāsim said: 'I conferred with 'Abd ar-Raḥīm[287] about the repentance of an unbeliever and God's saying: IF THEY CEASE [15] WHAT HAS ALREADY PASSED WILL BE FORGIVEN THEM.'[288] And he said: 'I indeed expect that a Muslim will be better off with God. Yet, I have learnt that the repentance of a Muslim is like a [second and new] adoption of Islam after the original adherence thereto.'

'Abdullāh b. Salām[289] said: 'I would not report to you except of a [duly] charged prophet or a revealed book. Indeed, when a man sins, then feels remorse because of it for as long as a twinkle of an eye, the sin falls away from him quicker than the twinkling of an eye.'

'Umar[290] said: 'Sit among the contrite. Indeed, they are the most delicate of hearts.'

One said: 'I know when God will forgive me.' 'When?' it was queried. 'When He restores me to His grace.'

Another said: 'I am more afraid of being deprived of repentance, than of being denied forgiveness. That is to say, forgiveness is certainly among the requisites and results of repentance.'

It is related: There was, among the Children of Israel, a young man who had served God for twenty years, then defied God for [yet another] twenty years. Afterwards he gazed in a mirror and saw a gray hair in his beard. This grieved him and he said, 'My God, I obeyed You for twenty years, and disobeyed [another] twenty. If I return would you accept me?' He then heard a voice, although he saw no one: 'You loved Us and We loved you; you abandoned Us and We abandoned you; you defied Us but We granted you time; if you return, We will accept you.'

Dhu-l-Nūn al-Miṣrī[291] said: 'God has servants who grew trees of sins that were like guardians of the soul. They watered the trees with the water of repentance; the trees then produced regret and sadness. They became possessed without madness and idiotic without faltering or muteness. They are the profound, the eloquent, [those] that knew God and His Apostle. They drank from the cup of purity and achieved endurance (*ṣabr*) throughout tribulation. They they lost their hearts in the spiritual world and their thoughts roamed among the palaces veiling [God's] omnipotence. They sought shelter under the portico of regret, and read the ledger of sin. Then they were seized with anguish until they reached the height of asceticism on the ladder of piety. They found sweet the bitter [taste] of abandoning this world, and found supple the coarse bed, until they seized the thread of salvation and the grip of security. Their spirits roamed freely in the heights until they attained the gardens of pleasure. They plunged into the sea of life; filled in the trenches of anxiety and forded the bridges of passion until they descended to the courtyard of knowledge. They drank from the stream of wisdom; traveled on the ship of sagacity, and set sail, under the breeze of salvation, on the sea of security, until they reached the gardens of comfort, the source of glory and nobility.'

This is sufficient to demonstrate that all true repentance is certainly accepted.

Should you say:

Are you saying what the Mu'tazila have taught that the acceptance of repentance is obligatory upon God?

To this I reply:

In what I have mentioned of the necessity of God's acceptance of repentance I intend only what is intended by him who says: Indeed, when a garment is cleansed with soap, the dirt needs must vanish; When the thirsty [man] drinks water the thirst needs must cease; When he is, for

awhile, denied water, thirst needs must result; if the thirst continues, death must [follow]. There is nothing in this of what the Mu'tazila intended by [the concept of] obligation [as regards] God['s actions]. I would rather say; God created obedience as an atonement for sin, and good as an antidote to evil, as He created water as a remedy of thirst. His omnipotence is sufficient for the opposite should it have been His pleasure. There is, then, no obligation upon God but what His eternal Will has anticipated must, certainly, come to exist.

You might assert:

Every penitent doubts the acceptance of his repentance, while he who drinks water is certain of the abatement of thirst. Why then does [the penitent] doubt?

To this I say:

His doubt [with regard to the] acceptability [of his repentance] is like the doubt regarding the presence of the conditions of health. Repentance has delicate [requisite] props and conditions as will [later] be mentioned. The presence of all its requisites cannot be ascertained as if it were the case of one who doubts a laxative he took, i.e, will it work? That, because of his doubt in getting the requisites for relief by the medication in the given case, time, manner of mixing and preparing the remedy, and the potency of [its various component] drugs. Such and the like lead to fear even after repentance and, certainly, necessitate doubt of its acceptability, as will be seen, God willing, from the discussion of the requisites of penitence.

[16] **THE SECOND PILLAR**: THE CONTEXT OF REPENTANCE BEING SINS: VENIAL AND MORTAL

Repentance is the abandonment of sin. But it is impossible to abandon a thing unless is it perceived. Now since repentance is obligatory, it follows that anything, without which it cannot be achieved, must [also] be obligatory. Sin consists of anything which varies from God's [expressed] command by omission or commission.

A detailed exposition of this calls for an explanation of the whole range of Obligations. Such is not our intent. Yet, we shall indicate their general principles and the interconnections of their constituent parts. God is the one who in His mercy helps to [reach] what is correct.

On the Division of Sin in Relation to the Qualities of Man

[First Division:]

Man possesses many qualities and characteristics, as explained in the

Book of the Wonders and Dangers of the Heart.[292] The stimuli of sin, however, are limited to four qualities: of supremacy, of delivery, of bestiality, and of predacity.

Such is the case, for man's substance is molded of different ingredients, each one resulting in a [different] effect, just as sugar, vinegar and saffron exert, in oxymel, different influences.

The bent for the supremacy qualities, encourages such traits as prestige; glory; power, love of praise, appreciation and wealth; the desire for perpetuate life; and quest for superiority over all until it seems that man wishes to say, 'I AM YOUR LORD, THE MOST HIGH.'[293] From these some of the greatest sins result, of which men are heedless, and which they do not reckon as sins. yet they are the great ravagers which are the source of most transgressions, as we have detailed in the Quarter of Destructive Matters.[294]

The second is the satanic quality from which derive envy, injustice, subterfuge, perfidy, instruction to immorality and deception, including corruption, hypocrisy, and the urge to [unlawful] innovation and error.

The third is the bestial quality from which derive gluttony, greed and desire for the fulfillment of the carnal appetites. From it derived also adultery, homosexuality, robbery, misappropriation of the property of orphans and all the other vanities for the sake of the appetites.

The fourth is the predatory quality from which derive anger, malice, assault, vilification, murder and waste of wealth. From these, various sins branch off.

These qualities have [a certain] gradation in human nature. The bestial quality is first predominant. It is followed by the predatory quality. Then, when the two get together and apply the mind to deceit, scheming and subterfuge, this is the satanic quality. Then, finally, the supremacy qualities prevail such as [the bent for] glory, power, arrogance, grandeur and control over all creatures.

These are the sources and origins of sin, the wells from which sin gushes forth to[295] the limbs. Some of them [pertain] especially to the heart; such as unbelief, heresy, hypocrisy and harboring evil designs; others [pertain specifically] to the eye and ear, or to the tongue, or the stomach and genitals, or the hands and feet; some to the entire body. As this is clear, there is no need to go into details.

[Another Division:]

Sins are divided into that which is between man and God, and that which pertains to the relation of man to man; that which concerns an

individual man, such as abstention from prayer, fast or obligations particular to him; and that which concerns inter-human relations, such as abstention from almsgiving, murder, usurpation of property, vilification of [another's] honour, and anything that infringes on another's rights, whether of life, limb, property, honour, belief or dignity; infringement on belief by leading astray and calling to heresy; incitement to transgression and to defiance against God, as practiced by certain preachers who cultivate hope over fear.

Sin that pertains to men is graver. In that which is between man and God [alone], unless it be idolatry, there is more hope for pardon. It has been transmitted in a tradition: There are three accounts: one which is forgiven, one which is never forgiven, and one which is not neglected. The account which is forgiven is that of the sins between man and God. The account which is never forgiven is that of idolatry. [17] The account which is not neglected is that of the injustices toward humans.[a] That is, man must be called to answer for them before he is forgiven.

[Third Division:]

Sins are divided into venial and mortal. There is much disagreement about them. Some say: There is no venial or mortal [sin], rather, every transgression of God's command is mortal sin. This [position, however,] is weak since God said: IF YOU AVOID THE HEINOUS SINS THAT ARE FORBIDDEN YOU, WE WILL ACQUIT YOU OF YOUR EVIL DEEDS AND ADMIT YOU BY THE GATE OF HONOUR.[296] Also: THOSE WHO AVOID THE HEINOUS SINS AND ABOMINATIONS, SAVE THE UNWILLED OFFENSES...[297] And, the Prophet said: 'The five prayers and [one] Friday [communal prayer] to the next, atone for what is between them, if mortal sins are avoided,'[b] and in another version, '. . . are expiations for what [comes] between them except the mortal sins.' According to what was retold by 'Abdullāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ,[298] the Prophet said: 'Attributing partners to God, disobedience of parents, murder and willful perjury [are the mortal sins].'[c]

The Companions and Followers differed in [setting] the number of mortal sins. [It ranged] from four, to seven, to nine, to eleven or more. Ibn Mas'ūd[299] said: 'They are four.' Ibn 'Umar said: 'They are seven.' 'Abdullāh b. 'Amur said: 'They are nine.' When Ibn 'Umar's statement, that their number is seven, reached Ibn 'Abbās[300] he would say: 'They are closer to seventy than seven.' He once said: 'All that God has forbidden [constitutes] a mortal sin.' Another said: 'Any [action for which] God has threatened hellfire is of the mortal sins.' One of the righteous

forebears said: 'Anything which necessitates [the infliction] of legal punishment (*ḥadd*) in this world, is a mortal sin.' It has been said: It is an obscure point, the number is not known, like the Night of Power (*laylatu-l-qadr*) or the hour of the Friday prayer. Ibn Mas'ūd, when he was asked of this, said: 'Read from the beginning of the Chapter of Women to verse thirty where it says: IF YOU AVOID THE HEINOUS SINS THAT ARE FORBIDDEN YOU...[301] Everything that God has prohibited in this chapter to this point is a mortal sin.'

Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī[302] said: 'The mortal sins number seventeen. I collected them from all the traditions[a] and from all that is gathered of the sayings of Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Umar, [18] and others. Four are of the heart: polytheism; persistence in disobedience; despairing of divine mercy; and [false] security from divine cunning. Four are of the tongue: false testimony; false accusation of the chaste; willful perjury, (i.e., that which justifies a falsehood or perverts the truth; which is, it is said, that by which the property of a Muslim[303] is seized wrongly, even a toothpick,[304] and it is termed 'plunger' (*ghamūs*) because it plunges its perpetrator into hellfire), and sorcery which is any speech which alters man or other substances from the states fixed at Creation. Three are of the stomach: imbibing wine or any intoxicating drink; eating illicitly, and from the property of an orphan; and conscious usury. Two are of sexual nature: adultery and homosexuality. Two are of the hands: murder and theft. One is of the feet: desertion of the ranks, one of two and ten from twenty. One is of the entire body: disobedience of parents.' He said: 'The acme of disobedience is that they justly adjure [the son] and he does not respect their appeal; if they ask of him something, and he does not give it to them; if they rebuke him he hits them; if they are hungry he does not feed them.'

This is what he said, and it is plausible. Complete satisfaction, however, will not be gleaned from it, since it is possible both to add to it or subtract from it. Thus he has listed usury and embezzling an orphan's property as mortal sins. They are [both, however,] misappropriation of property. But of criminal acts he mentioned only murder as a mortal sin. Yet, gouging the eye, cutting off the hands, and torture of Muslims by beating and types of punishment, did not occur to him. Surely, beating and torturing an orphan, and amputating his limbs are greater [in sinfulness] than embezzling his property. Indeed, in the tradition [it is stated]: 'Excessive reviling, and detracting from the reputation of a fellow Muslim are mortal sins.'[b] This is in addition to slander of the chaste.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī[305] and others of the Companions said: 'Indeed you are doing things which are, in your eyes, finer than a hair, and which in the time of the Prophet, God bless him, we used to reckon as mortal sins.'[a] A faction said: 'Any premeditated [evil act] and anything that God has forbidden are mortal sins.'

To clarify this, take the case of the investigator of theft, as to whether it is or is not a major crime. [19] [This contemplation] will not be sound so long as one does not understand the meaning of mortal sin. What is intended by this is: Is theft prohibited or not? There is no hope of clarifying this without first establishing the essence [of the term] 'prohibited' (*ḥarām*), and then, finding out whether that essence is present in theft.

'Major sin', then, is lexically vague and has no specific connotation, either in [Arabic] lexicography or in [Islamic] law. This is due to the fact that 'major' and 'minor' are modifiers. Any sin is major in comparison to what is beneath it and minor in comparison to what is above it. To lie down with an alien female is a major sin relative to gazing [at her]. It is minor [,however,] in comparison to fornication. Amputation of a Muslim's hand is a major sin relative to beating him but minor in comparison to killing him.

Certainly, that action especially for which hellfire was set can be termed by man a mortal sin. By this appelation we mean to say that the punishment of hellfire is grave. Man can also apply [the term 'mortal'] to that [action] which necessitates a legal punishment (*ḥadd*), for that which hastens a necessary punishment in this world is grave. He may also apply [this term] to that which is mentioned in the text of the Book as interdicted, for he can say that its specification in the Koran indicates the act's gravity. Then, again, since the Koranic stipulations also differ in their gradation, it will certainly be both grave and mortal by comparison. To these applications there is no objection, and preserved expressions of the Companions vacillate between these points. Possibly they can be reduced to one of these cases.

Certainly, it is important that you know the meaning of God's saying: IF YOU AVOID THE MORTAL SINS THAT ARE FORBIDDEN YOU, WE WILL ACQUIT YOU OF YOUR EVIL DEEDS,[306] and [the meaning of] the Prophet's saying: 'Prayers are atonement for what [falls] between them except mortal sins.' Indeed, this is the ruling principle on mortal sin.[307]

The truth of the matter is that sins are divided, according to the view of the law (*shar'*), into those that are known to be considered by it as grave; those that are known to be counted among the venial sins;

and those that are in doubt and the rule about them is unknown. To strive for a comprehensive definition or a definite figure is to strive for the impossible. For this is impossible except by hearing the Apostle of God say: 'By mortal sins I meant ten or five,' and list them. But as this is not reported, though in some versions 'three mortal sins' are mentioned,[a] in others, seven,[b] and 'that blasphemy is one of the mortal sins', apart from the seven and three, it becomes clear that no specific number was meant. How could one then aspire to set a [specific] number when the divine law does not? Perhaps the law intended to obscure it so that men would be in dread, as they are on the Night of Power (*laylata-l-qadr*), to increase [thereby] men's diligence in searching for it.

Certainly, we have an overall method which enables us to know the categories and types of mortal sin, upon investigation. As for its main manifestations we know them by contemplation and approximation. We also know the greatest of mortal sins.

But, as for the most minor of the venial there is no way of knowing it.

The point is that we know, by the testimony of both the law and the illumination of insight, that the purpose of all the precepts is to lead men into proximity of God and the bliss of encounter with Him; and that men can attain this only through perception of God, His attributes, books and prophets. This is indicated by the verse: I HAVE NOT CREATED JINN AND MANKIND EXCEPT TO SERVE ME,[308] that is, that they be My servitors. Yet, man [the servitor] cannot be a servant so long as he has not perceived his master in His mastery, and himself in his servitude. Man must know himself and his Master. This, indeed, is the ultimate purpose of the mission of prophets.

This is, however, fulfilled only in the life of this world. This is the meaning of the Prophet's word: 'This world is a place [for the] cultivation of the hereafter.'[c] Maintenance of this world thus also becomes the domain of religion, inasmuch as the world is a means of fulfilling religion (*dīn*). Two things of this world are connected with the hereafter: human beings and possessions. Anything, then, which is in the way of the perception of God is the gravest of mortal sin, the next being that which is destructive of human life, and the next is that which impedes the livelihood of men. These are three stages. [20] It is evidently the intent of all the creeds that the hearts must hold the perception [of the divine], the bodies - preserve life, humans - preserve possessions. It is unimaginable that these three matters would be [subject] to dissent [among the various] creeds. It is, then, inconceivable that God would send a prophet, desiring thereby the improvement of [His] creatures in their affairs, both

spiritual and temporal, only to command them what would impede them from perceiving Him and His messengers, or that He would command them to destroy life and property. It follows that mortal sin has three levels. The first level is that which prevents [man] from perception of God and His apostles. This is unbelief (*kufr*), and there is no mortal sin greater than unbelief, for it is ignorance that is the barrier between God and man, and man's means to draw nigh to God is knowledge (*'ilm*) and perception (*ma'rifa*).

Man's proximity [to God] corresponds to the measure of man's perception while his remoteness [from Him] corresponds to the measure of his ignorance. That ignorance which is called unbelief is followed by [man's feeling of] security from God's devices and the despair of His mercy. This, indeed, is also of the very essence of ignorance. For he who perceives God could not conceive himself to be [in this sense] secure or despairing.

This stage is followed by the various heresies connected with [the concepts of] the essence of God, His attributes and works. Some of these are graver than others. The disparity [among them] is commensurate with their varying [degrees] of ignorance, and with their holding on to the belief in God, His works and revelations, His commands and prohibitions. The gradations of this are unlimited. They are divided into what one knows to be included within the mortal sins mentioned in the Koran; what is known not to be included; and what one is in doubt about. Seeking to dispel the doubt about this middle category is a hopeless aspiration.

The second level [relates to] human beings, since on their survival and maintenance depend the continuity of life and attainment of perception of God. Consequently, murder, even though it is beneath [the gravity] of unbelief, is certainly of the mortal sins. For, while one strikes at the goal [of religion] itself, the other strikes at the means to the [fulfillment] of that goal. For life in the world is intended only for the sake of the hereafter and the attainment thereof by means of [human] perception of God. This mortal sin is followed by amputation of limbs and whatever leads to death, even beating, with some acts being graver than others.

The prohibition of adultery and homosexuality falls within this category because if all men were to be content with males [alone] in fulfilling [their] carnal appetites, procreation would cease. Rejection of the existant is close to cutting off existence. As for adultery, it does not negate the principle of existence but rather distorts the lines of kinship and nullifies inheritance, mutual aid and many of those matters without which life [cannot be] well ordered. How, indeed, can good order be achieved

together with the permission of adultery? Animal life is not well thriving so long as the male is not with his particular females, set apart from the other males. For this reason it is inconceivable for adultery to be permissible according to a religion[309] whose aim is the improvement [of life]. Adultery needs be on a level beneath murder as it does not threaten the continuity of [human] existence, nor does it prevent its principle. It [merely] threatens the distinction of familial relationships, and stimulates factors that lead to strife. [Adultery] must, however, be considered graver than homosexuality as the [natural] desires spur it on both sides, its frequency is greater, and with frequency its harmful impact.

The third degree [relates to] property, which is the life-stuff of man. Men cannot control its acquisition chaotically, even until seizure, theft and the like. Rather it must be preserved, so that its continuity might insure the continuity of human beings. Nevertheless, property, when it is seized, can be regained, and if it has been disposed of, restitution is possible. The affair, then, cannot become [too] grave.

It is true that when its acquisition occurs in a [wrong] manner that would make correction difficult, such [interference] ought to be [considered] a mortal sin. This can be in four ways. The first is secret affair, which is theft. If it is not generally controlled - how can it be corrected. The second is consumption of an orphan's property. This too is a covert matter. I refer to a guardian or custodian, entrusted with [the property], who has not [possible] opposition save the orphan who is a minor unaware of the matter. This must be considered grave. Different is the case of extortion which is overt, and that of breach of [a normal] trust where the consignor can oppose the action and seek justice for himself. The third is its alienation by false testimony. The fourth is seizure of a trust and the like by [means of] willful perjury.

Indeed these methods[310] are not open to correction and it is unimaginable that religions should differ at all as to interdicting them. Some [cases] are graver than others, but they all are beneath the second level which is concerned with life. These four are worthy of being assigned as mortal sins even though canon law does not invoke legal punishment in some cases. However, [divine] threats in their regard are numerous, and in the affairs of this world their impact is great.

As for usury it is only the consumption of another's property by mutual consent, along with the breach of a condition imposed by canon law. It is not impossible that there should be a variance among the religions [21] in a matter like this. If extortion,[311] which is the taking of another's property without[312] his consent and without the law's permission, has

not been deemed a mortal sin, then exacting interest, done with the assent of the owner, albeit without legal sanction, should preferably not be considered a mortal sin.[313]

Even though the canon law views interest[314] with rebuke, it has done so also with regard to the iniquity of extortion and the like, and to breach of trust, with the result that it merits consideration whether a dāniq's[315] worth of embezzlement and extortion is mortal sin, yet this is an area of doubt, and the trend of thought is against including such deeds under the heading of mortal sin. Rather, it is appropriate to limit mortal sin to that which is legally so indisputable that it be religiously obvious.

Thus, of what Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī[316] mentioned, only calumny, intoxication, witchcraft, desertion from the ranks and disobedience to parents[317] remain.

As for drinking, inasmuch as it removes reason, it is appropriate that it be a mortal sin, as attested to by both the severity of the law and rational considerations. For indeed, the intellect is a gift just as life, nay life is worthless without the [faculty of] reason. Elimination, then, of [the faculty of] reason is a mortal sin.

This does not follow, however, from a drop of wine. No doubt, if a man drank water in which was a drop of wine, that would not constitute a mortal sin. It is merely drinking polluted water. The drop itself is an object of doubt. That the law lays down legal punishment for it [merely] indicates how gravely it views the matter of intoxication. For it is counted as a mortal sin under the law. It is beyond human ability to grasp all the subtleties of the divine law. If, then, there is consensus that it is mortal sin, this line must be pursued. If not, there is room for hesitation.

As for calumny, it involves only hurting [people's] good repute, and this falls below the level of detriment to property.[318] Again, hurt to honour is a matter of degree, its most severe being false accusation regarding the abomination of fornication. The canon law views this gravely.

I think, generally, that the Companions used to count any [action] which called for legal punishment a mortal sin. It, from this standpoint, is not expiated by the five prayers, and this is what we mean, now, by [the term] 'mortal sin'. But, inasmuch as it is possible that the [revelational] laws would differ about this, while analogy alone does not point to the magnitude and gravity [of this charge], nay, it would be possible for the Law to stipulate that one valid witness, upon seeing a man fornicate, may bear testimony, in which case the accused is flogged by virtue of

this testimony. But, if his testimony is not accepted, then the other man's punishment is not evident, practically, even if it is one of the actually occurring affairs in the category of needs. Then, this too is appended to the mortal sins of him who knows the rule of canon law. As for he who thinks that he must testify himself or that another may join him in support, it is not necessary that it be counted as a mortal sin of his.

As for sorcery, if it contains unbelief it is a mortal sin; if not, its gravity depends upon the damage which results from it, such as loss of life, sickness or the like.

As for desertion and disobedience versus parents, this too should be, by virtue of analogy, subject to hesitation.

Thus we conclude that any accusation, except adultery, assaulting people, oppressing them by usurpation of their property; evicting them from their dwellings and villages and ousting them from their homelands, does not involve a mortal sin. For it has not been mentioned among the seventeen, the highest listing given, so that hesitation in this too is not unlikely. The Tradition, however, indicates its designation as mortal sin, and so it may be appended to such sin.

In conclusion, the matter, therefore, reverts to the meaning we attached to the term 'mortal sin', i.e., that for the expiation of which, according to the rule of canon law, the prayers are not efficacious. That again is divided into what one knows will not, at all, be expiated; that for which people should atone; and that which is open to doubt. Of the last, some cases may be presumed to be solved positively or negatively, and others are so doubtful that only a text from the Book or [prophetic] tradition can resolve them. In the absence of such a text there is no point in seeking resolution of the doubt.

You might object:

This proves the impossibility of perceiving the definition of a mortal sin, and how can the Law deal with what cannot be defined?

Know, then, that anything that is connected[319] with judgement in this world can be open to ambiguity. Yet[320] it is this world that is the sphere of prescribed divine law. About mortal sin, as such, there is no rule in this world. Rather, anything necessitating legal punishment is known by its [separate] name, such as theft, adultery and the like. But the rule re mortal sin is merely that the five prayers do not atone for it. This is a matter that relates to the hereafter. Ambiguity about it is appropriate in order that man be fearful and cautious, and should not venture, relying on the efficacy of the five prayers, into venial sins.

Thus, avoidance of mortal sins [22] atones venial ones, in accordance

with the divine word: IF YOU AVOID THE MORTAL SINS THAT ARE FORBIDDEN YOU, WE WILL ACQUIT YOU OF YOUR EVIL DEEDS.[321] But, avoidance of mortal sin atones for the venial sin [only] when man abstains despite his ability and volition, like one who has power over a woman and could cohabit with her but restrains himself from intercourse and limits himself to gazing or touching. His internal struggle to abstain from sexual congress has greater effect in the illumination of his heart than his audacity in gazing has in the darkening of his heart. This, then, is the meaning of his atonement. If, however, he was impotent; abstaining only because of disability; or refrained in fear of another [extraneous] matter, then such would not, by any means, serve the purpose of atonement. Whoever, by nature, had no[322] desire for wine, and even were it permitted him would not drink of it, his abstention would not atone for the auxiliary venial sins like listening to the playing of musical instruments. Certainly, he who craves wine and listening to music, yet restrains himself with great effort from wine and settled for music, his internal struggle in abstention may erase from his heart the darkness which accrued to it through the sin of listening to music.

All of these judgements pertain to the hereafter, and it is conceivable that some of them will remain in a state of uncertainty and doubt. Their particulars can be known only from a text, which text or comprehensive definition has not yet been [clearly] granted, and only varying versions have reached us.

Thus that Abū Hurayra[323] said: The Apostle of God, of blessed memory, said: 'One prayer to the next and one Ramaḍān to the next is an atonement, except in three matters, [namely]; polytheism, abandoning the tradition (*sunna*) and breach of contract.'[a] He was asked: 'What [constitutes] abandoning tradition?' He replied:[324] 'Seceding from the community.' 'And what of breach of contract,' [he was asked]. 'That a man swore allegiance to [a leader] then go out with sword [in hand] to combat him.' This and its like are the expressions [in the matter]. They do not indicate a total number, nor do they point to a general rule. Thus the matter certainly remains obscure.

You might object:

Testimony (*shahāda*) is accepted only from him who avoids the mortal sins; caution from venial sins is not a requisite for its acceptance. This is [in accord with] this world's rules.

Know, then, that we do not restrict the rejection of testimony to the mortal sins. Indisputably, one who listens to the playing of musical instruments, dresses in silk brocade, wears a golden ring, and drinks from gold and silver vessels, his testimony is not accepted, yet no one has concluded that these matters are mortal sins.

'Ash-Shāfi'ī[325] said: 'If a Ḥanafī drank nabīdh,[326] I should impose legal punishment but would not reject his testimony.' By obligating legal punishment he made it a mortal sin, yet he did not reject the testimony.

This shows that neither acceptance nor rejection of testimony depends upon either venial or mortal sins [as such]. Rather, all sins damage integrity except those which man obviously cannot escape, such as slander, snooping, evil thought, falsehood in some statements, listening to gossip, abandoning the commanding of the good and forbidding the evil; eating doubtful food; abuse of a child and slave, beating them, in anger, more than is right; deference to tyrannical rulers; friendship with profligates; and indolence in instruction of household and child in all their religious needs. It is inconceivable that the witness could avoid, more or less, these sins except by withdrawing and devoting himself exclusively to the affairs of the hereafter, and curbing himself for awhile to the extent that he would be able to stick to his path even after he has rejoined society. If only the word of such a man were to be accepted, then it would be so scarce that all litigation and testimony would prove untenable.

Dressing in silk, listening to music, playing backgammon, social intercourse with the drinking set at the time of a party, intimacy with alien women, and the like of these venial sins are not of this kind. In accepting or rejecting testimony one must look into these ways, not into mortal or venial sins.

Then again some of these venial sins, because of which testimony is not rejected, surely may bring on the rejection of testimony if a man persists in them, e.g., habitual gossip and slander, keeping company and friendship with profligates. The venial sin grows by persistence, just as the permissible but indifferent act, like playing chess, singing constantly, etc., may become, through persistence, a venial sin.

So much for the rule re mortal and venial sins

[23] *How Higher and Lower States, in the Hereafter are distributed according to Good and Evil Works in this Life*

This life (*dunyā*) is of the material world while the hereafter is of the transcendent world. By 'this life' I refer to your state before death, and by the 'hereafter' to your condition after death. For your [temporal] existence and afterlife are your attributes and states; [that] which is near is called 'this life' and that which follows later is called the hereafter

(*ākhira*).

We speak now while being in this life of the next. Because, we speak in this life, it being the sensible world, but our purpose is the explanation of the hereafter, which is the world beyond the senses, and it is inconceivable to describe the transcendent world within the sensible world except by adducing parables. That is why it is said: AND THOSE PARABLES, WE COIN THEM FOR THE PEOPLE, BUT NONE UNDERSTANDS THEM SAVE THOSE WHO KNOW.[327] This is because compared to the transcendental world (*'ālam al-malakūt*) the temporal world is like slumber. That is why the Prophet said: 'men are asleep, and when they die they awaken.'[a]

That which will occur in the waking state becomes clear to you during sleep only [through] parables which are in need of interpretation. Likewise, that which will take place in the waking state of the hereafter cannot be explained in the sleep of this life except through a multitude of parables, by which I mean that which we know from the science of dream-interpretation. Of these [similitudes] three should suffice if you are sagacious.

A man came to Ibn Sīrīn[328] and said: 'In my dream I seemed to have a seal in my hand with which I sealed men's mouths and women's pudenda.' Ibn Sīrīn said: 'You are a muezzin who announces the prayers during Ramaḍān before the break of dawn.' 'Right you are,' replied the man.

Another man came to him and said: 'I saw myself pouring oil into olives.' Ibn Sīrīn replied: 'If you have a female slave whom you bought, examine her case closely, for, indeed, she is your mother who was taken prisoner while you were an infant.[329] For the olives are the source of the oil, and now [in your dream] it is returned to the source.' The man, then, looked into the matter, and, in fact, the slave turned out to be his mother who had been taken captive while he was an infant.

Yet another said to Ibn Sīrīn: 'I was myself adorning the necks of swine with pearls.'[330] Ibn Sīrīn said: 'You teach wisdom to the unworthy.' It was as he said.

Dream-interpretation, from first to last, consists of parables that convey to you the way of coining parables. By a parable we mean the rendering of meaning in such a form that if one considers its meaning he finds it true, yet, if he looks at its form he will find it false. Thus the muezzin, if he looked at the form of the seal and the imprinting of it on the pudenda, would consider it false. Indeed, he did not seal with it at all. But, if he considered its meaning he found it true since from it issued the spirit and sense of sealing, which is the stopping intended by sealing.

The prophets cannot address humans except by use of parables, for they are commissioned to speak to men according to man's level of understanding. But men are[331] [as] in sleep, and nothing is revealed to a sleeper except through parable. When they die, then, they awake and realize that the parable is true. That is why the Prophet said: 'The heart of the believer is between two of the Merciful's fingers.'[a] This is of the parables that only those that know can understand. As for the ignorant [one], his level [of ability] does not go beyond the literal sense of the parable, because of his ignorance of interpretation (*tafsīr*) which is called allegorical interpretation (*ta'wīl*) just as the interpretation of the 'parables' seen in sleep is called 'dream interpretation' (*ta'bīr*). Thus he affirms of God a hand and a finger — may God be exalted far above this view![332] Similar to this is the saying of the Prophet: 'God created Adam in His image.'[b] [The ignorant men] understand image [as meaning] only color, form and shape. He attributes these to God.[333] That is why some people stumbled in the matter of divine attributes, even re divine speech. They represent it as voice and letter etc. It would take too long to discuss it.

There may occur the coining of parables concerning the hereafter, which parables the unbeliever, whose view rigidly sticks to the literal sense and what he considers contradictory in it he will reject. For example, the Prophet says: 'On the Day of Resurrection, Death in the form of a beautiful ram will be brought and killed.'[c] The stupid heretic revolts, deems it a falsehood, and infers from it the falsity of the prophets. He says: 'O Almighty God, death is an accident and the ram is a body. How is an accident transformed into a body? Is this not [24] absurd?' But God keeps the knowledge of His secrets out of reach of those fools, as it is said: NONE UNDERSTANDS IT SAVE THOSE THAT KNOW.[334] The wretch does not understand. A man said: 'I saw in my sleep that a ram was brought and it was said that it was the plague which [ravaged] the village. Then, it was slaughtered.' The interpreter said: 'You are right. It is as you have seen it. It indicates that the plague will cease and never recur, for the slaughtered was the source of desperation.' Both are right: the interpreter in his explanation, the dreamer in his vision. The truth here goes back to the fact that the angel[335] in charge of dreams is the one who informs men during sleep of that which is [written] on the 'safely preserved tablet' (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ*);[336] he instructed the dreamer, by means of a parable which he coined for him,

of what is on the preserved tablet. For the sleeper grasps the parable, the parable is true and its meaning sound.

The prophets, also, when they address men in this life, which, compared to the hereafter, is as slumber, convey meanings to men's minds through similitudes, out of divine wisdom and kindness to men, facilitating the comprehension of that which they would fail to grasp without parables. The statement, then, that death is brought in the form of a beautiful ram is a simile coined to convey to the mind that death brings on despair.

The heart is predisposed to being influenced by similes and to establishing their meanings. The Koran, therefore, characterized extreme power when it stated: BE, AND IT IS.[337] The Prophet expressed the alacrity of transformation when he said: 'the heart of the believer is between two of the Merciful's fingers.' We have already indicated the sense of that in the Book of the Foundations of the Articles of Faith, which is in the quarter of Acts of Worship.[338] Let us now return to the matter at hand.

The point is that the indication of the distribution of degrees and attainments for good and evil works is impossible except by striking similes. Let us, then, understand our simile as to its meaning, not its form. Just as men differ in [the attainment] of happiness or misery in this life, so are they divided in the hereafter into classes and differ in an innumerable variety of greater or lesser happiness or misery. The hereafter is not at all different in this respect. For the ruler of [both] the temporal and the transcendental worlds is one; no associate has He. His order, which originates from His eternal will, is constant, unchangeable.

While we are unable to enumerate the individual levels, nevertheless, we can compute the [broader] categories. In the hereafter, men are divided, clearly, into four categories: the damned; the chastised; the redeemed; and the blessed.[339] An analogy in this world is the following. A king captures a region. He kills some of the [natives]; they are destroyed. He chastises some for awhile but does not kill them; they are chastised. He frees some; they are redeemed. He confers honours on some; they are successful. If the king is just he will divide them strictly on their merits. He will slay only those who deny the king's right, resisting him politically. He chastises only those who fell short in his service while acknowledging his dominion and lofty rank. He would free only those who, following recognition of his power, have not failed to the extent of deserving chastisement, nor have rendered service to the extent of deserving reward. He honours only those who have spent their lives

to serve and support him.

It is proper that honours granted should vary in rank in accordance with the degrees of service; that the destruction of the damned should be, either by beheading or infliction of an exemplary punishment, in accordance with their degree of opposition; that the severity, duration and type of punishment for the chastised should be in accordance with the degree of their failing. Each of these categories is sub-divided into innumerable groups.

It is thus to be understood that, in the hereafter too, men are variously disposed. One will be destroyed, another chastised for awhile, one redeemed to reside in the abode of security, and another blessed. Moreover, the blessed are divided into those residing in the gardens of Eden, the gardens of sheltering retreat, or the gardens of Paradise.[340] Among the chastised, also, there are those punished for a while, those tormented for one thousand to seven thousand years. These latter are the last to leave hellfire, as it has been reported in a tradition.[a] The damned, who despaired of God's mercy, are also of different categories. All these variations correspond to the differences in their obedient and rebellious acts. Let us, now, mention the mode of distribution.

[25] The first level is that of the damned, by which term we refer to those who despair of God's mercy. Do not be heedless of the meaning of our simile in which the one slain was he who despaired of the king's pleasure and deference. This level is only for heretics; disdainers; those devoted solely to temporal existence; those who deny God, His apostles and scriptures. Yet, ultimate happiness lies in nearness to God and gazing at His countenance. Such is attained only through that perception which finds its expression in faith [in God] and acceptance [of His prophets]. The heretics are those who deny; the disbelievers are those who despair of God's eternal mercy. It is they who disbelieve the Lord of the Universe and His appointed prophets. But upon that day they shall be veiled from their Lord most certainly.[341] Yet whenever someone is veiled from his beloved, a bar is set between him and that which he desires, he certainly is seared as by hellfire by the fire of separation.[342]

The gnostics therefore say: Our fear is not of hellfire, nor is our yearning for the maidens of paradise. Nay, what we seek is only the Encounter, and what we flee from — is the Veil. Also: One who worships God seeking compensation is ignoble. He worships God as if out of the quest for paradise or for fear of hellfire. The gnostic, however, serves Him for His own sake, and seeks naught save God Himself. He desires neither houri nor paradisiac fruit, and fears not hellfire. For the overwhelming fire

of separation is likely to prove more painful than the fire which consumes the body. Indeed, the fire of separation is THE FIRE OF GOD KINDLED ROARING OVER THE HEARTS.[343] The fire of Hell affects naught save the body but, in relation to the affliction of the heart, the torment of the body is scorned. Therefore it has been said:

The hottest fire of Hell is cooler than,
The flame of passion in the lover's heart.[344]

One should not ignore this [phenomenon] of the hereafter as there exists a visible parallel in the temporal world. It has been observed than a man possessed by the ecstasy of love runs over fire and on the roots of reeds that injure his feet yet he feels it not due to the intensity of that which fills his heart. You can see, in combat, how fury overwhelms a man, so that he remains unaware of injuries sustained: The rage is a fire filling his heart. The Prophet has said: 'Rage is a portion of hellfire.'[a]

The burning of the heart is more potent that the burning of the body. As you can see, the stronger nullifies sensitivity to the lesser. Death by fire and sword is merely due to the separation of two components connected in a union feasible in bodies. But that which separates the heart from its beloved, to whom it is joined in a union more perfect than that [found] in bodies, is far more painful. [This is obvious] if you are a man of heart and insight. Nor it is unlikely that one who has no heart will not grasp the intensity of this pain and will regard it lightly in comparison to the pain of the body.

If a youth were given the choice between the pain of doing without ball and mallet and the pain of missing the rank of a ruler, he would, by no means, be sensitive to the preclusion from power. Nor would he reckon that as painful. He would exclaim: '[Running] with the mallet on the playing field is dearer to me than occupying a thousand royal thrones.'

Likewise, one, who is dominated by gluttony, if given the choice between pastry[345] and sweets and a good action by which he would triumph over his enemies and delight his friends, surely would choose the pastry and sweets, as a result of the loss of that stimulus (*ma'nā*) by which glory becomes desirable, and the presence of the faculty by which food becomes delightful. This applies to one who has been dominated by bestial and predatory traits, one in whom the angelic qualities have not appeared, those traits which tally with the delight exclusively in proximity to the Lord, and are grieved only by remoteness and concealment [from Him]. Just as taste resides only in the tongue and hearing only in the ears, so this quality is only of the heart. And, just as one who is bereft of hearing and sight cannot appreciate the delight of melody nor the beauty of form and colour, so a man who has no heart cannot have this [spiritual] sensation. Not every man has a heart. Or else the Divine Word: SURELY IN THAT THERE IS A REMINDER TO HIM WHO POSSESSES A HEART,[346] would not be true. In this verse God qualified one unmindful of the Koran as one who is bereft of the heart.

I do not mean, by the term 'heart', that which is encased by the ribs. Nay, I mean the conscience which is of the world of dominion.[347] That flesh[, of the same name,] which is of the world of creation, is its throne, the chest [cavity] its seat and the other limbs are its [26] sphere and its realm. Both creation and dominion are the Lord's. Yet, that conscience about which God said: SAY, THE SPIRIT IS OF THE COMMAND OF MY LORD,[348] is the commander and king. For between the world of creation and that of dominion there is a certain relation,[349] the world of dominion commanding the world of creation. It is that spiritual substance[350] which, if it is sound, brings soundness to the rest of the body. One who perceives it, knows himself and one who knows himself knows his Lord. Then man can have the first inkling of the spiritual wisdom implied in the Prophet's statement that 'God created Adam in His image.'

God views with compassion those who attribute to Him the literal meaning of His expression and those who stray in the method of [allegorical] interpretation. If His compassion for the former is greater than for the latter, it is because compassion comes in accordance with the measure of the error, their error being greater even though they share in the common misfortune of being deprived of the truth. For the truth is the bounty of God. He gives to whom He will, and God is of bounty abounding.[351] It is His wisdom for which He singles out whom He will.[352] . . . AND WHOSO IS GIVEN THE WISDOM, HAS BEEN GIVEN MUCH GOOD.[353]

Let us return to the matter at hand. We went to all that length and dwelt extensively on a matter which is higher than the study of practical religion which we pursue in this book. It has become evident, then, that the degree of destruction is visited only on the ignorant deniers. As the evidence of this from God's book and the Tradition (*sunna*) of His Apostle is too extensive, we have not cited it.

The second level is that of the chastised. On it are those who are endowed with the basic faith but have failed in corresponding fidelity.

Indeed, the beginning of faith is monotheism (*tawḥīd*), that is, that one serves only God. But a person who pursues his own whim, takes his whim to be god; consequently he pays lip-service to being monotheist without, in truth,being one. However, the meaning of the profession, 'there is no god but God', is as the Koran states: SAY: "GOD". THEN LEAVE THEM ALONE, PLAYING THEIR GAME OF PLUNGING.[354] That means: abandon completely everything save God.

The sense of the verse: THOSE WHO HAVE SAID 'OUR LORD IS GOD', THEN HAVE GONE STRAIGHT. . .,[355] is: The straight path, following of which is the only means to full monotheism, is, like the bridge (*ṣirāṭ*)[356] in the description of the hereafter, thinner than a hair and sharper than [the blade] of a sword. No man can escape deviation from it, even in an easy matter, as he is yet not free of following his whim, even if it be in a trifling. That detracts from the fullness of monotheism according to the [degree] of deviation from the straight path. Such certainly necessitates a defect in the degree of proximity to God. With each [such] defect, two fires attend: the fire of separation resulting from that elusive fullness of faith, and the fire of hell as the Koran has described it.

Everyone who deviates from the straight path is punished twice in two respects. The severity or leniency, however, and the varying duration of that punishment is decided by two factors: the intensity of his faith and the degree of his pursuit of whim. Since man, in most cases, is not devoid of failing in one of the two respects, God said: NOT ONE OF YOU THERE IS, BUT HE SHALL GO DOWN TO IT: THAT FOR THY LORD IS A THING DECREED, DETERMINED. THEN WE SHALL DELIVER THOSE THAT WERE GODFEARING: AND THE EVIL DOERS WE SHALL LEAVE THERE, HOBBLING ON THEIR KNEES.[357] The pious of old said, therefore: 'Our fear is caused by our being sure that we are destined for the fire, and we have doubts about [our] salvation.' When al-Ḥasan[358] reported the above-mentioned tradition of the one who leaves hellfire after a thousand years crying, 'O Compassionate One! O Benefactor!',[a] Ḥasan exclaimed: 'If only I could be that man.'

Some traditions indicate that the last to leave hellfire will do so after seven thousand years, and that the duration differs between an instant and seven thousand years, so that some pass over hellfire like a fleeting bolt of lightning, without any sojourn. Between the instant and the seven thousand years there are varying degrees of duration: a day; a week; a month; and so forth. Also, [the traditions indicate] a diversity in the

intensity with the maximum limitless, and the minimum an accounting. [This is just] as [in the case] of the king who sometimes punishes, by rebuke, those who have fallen short in their works, then grants pardon; sometimes by flogging and at other times he inflicts a different sort punishment. A third difference beyond duration and intensity, pertains to chastisement; that being variety of type. For one is punished with mere confiscation of his property; another by loss of his property and the slaying of his children, and seizure of his women, chastisement of his kinsfolk, flogging, amputation of tongue, hand, [27] nose, ear and so forth. Such variations exist also in the chastisement of the hereafter. These are indicated in the trenchant propositions of the law [of Islam].

These are in accordance with the strength or weakness of faith and the greater or lesser quantity of good and evil deeds.[359] The intensity of chastisement is according to the intensity and frequency of the evil deeds; while its quantity is linked to the quantity of evil. The variety of type is related to the variety of deeds. This has been disclosed to those who possess hearts, through Koran passages, illumined by faith. This is the meaning of the verse: THY LORD WRONGS NOT HIS SERVANTS.[360] And again: TODAY EACH SOUL SHALL BE RECOMPENSED FOR THAT IT HAS EARNED.[361] Also: . . . AND THAT MAN HAS NAUGHT SAVE AS HE HAS LABOURED.[362] And: . . . WHOSO HAS DONE AN ATOM'S WEIGHT OF GOOD SHALL SEE IT. AND WHOSO HAS DONE AN ATOM'S WEIGHT OF EVIL SHALL SEE IT;[363] and other such passages in the Scripture and Tradition as to reward and punishment being recompense for man's acts, all this in justice without iniquity. The trend is toward pardon and mercy inasmuch as our Prophet quoted God as saying: 'My mercy outweighs My wrath.'[a] God said: AND IF IT BE A GOOD DEED HE WILL DOUBLE IT, AND GIVE FROM HIMSELF A MIGHTY WAGE.[364] Thus these general points, therefore, pertaining to the relation of greater and lesser ranks to good and evil works are known through the decisive statements of revelation and the illumination of gnosis. As for the particulars, they can be known only as [probable] opinion relying on the literal sense of the traditions and the type of intuition drawing upon the lights of contemplative scrutiny.

We assert, then, that anyone who absorbed the principle of faith, avoids all major sins and fulfills all religious obligations — namely, the five pillars, — with only sporadic minor transgressions, his punishment will, it seems, be merely a reprimand. When he is brought to account, his good works outweigh his evil ones, inasmuch as traditions have it that

the five prayers, Friday prayer, and the Ramaḍān fast atone for that which [occurs] between them. Also, according to the Koran text, avoidance of major sin atones for minor ones. The minimum of atonement is that the punishment be averted though the accounting was not. Anyone in this position, with his scales heavy in the balance [with good deeds], shall, after the favourable balance is evident and the accounting disposed, inherit a pleasing life.[365] How excellent is his joining the Companions of the Right Hand or the near stationed, and his entering the gardens of Eden or the Supreme Paradise.[366]

The same applies to the classes of faith. For faith is of two types: imitative, as is the faith of the masses who believe that they are told and persist therein; and the revelatory faith which is achieved through the enlarging of the breast by divine illumination until all reality is exposed as it is. It then becomes clear that everything originates and ends in God for naught is real save God, His attributes and works. It is the people of this class that are the near-stationed ones who abide in the Supreme Paradise. They enjoy the utmost degree of proximity to the heavenly host. They too, however, are of various categories. Some are more advanced, others less, the disparity dependent upon the differences in their knowledge of God. The gnostics' degrees of gnosis are innumerable inasmuch as fully fathoming God's glorious essence is impossible. The sea of gnosis has no coast and no bottom and, therefore, men plunge into it according to their strength and according to what they have been granted by God throughout the ages. The stations on the road to God are endless, and innumerable are the levels of those who travel God's path.

One who believes by imitation is of the Companions of the Right Hand but on a level lower than the near-stationed. The Companions of the Right Hand are further subdivided. The level of the highest among them approaches the lowest level of the near-stationed. This is the position of one who avoided all major sins and performed all religious obligations - namely, the five pillars, i.e., the verbal utterance of the profession of faith, prayer, alms, fast and pilgrimage. One who perpetrated one or more major sins or neglected some of Islam's pillars, if he truly repents before his time came due, joins those who sinned not. For he who repents is as one who has never sinned. A washed garment is as one which was never soiled.

If he died before repenting, it is a perilous matter, for he may die while persisting [in sin] and this may be the cause of wavering in his faith, and he may be assigned to a bad end. This is especially so when his

faith was of a conformist kind. For imitation, even if resolute, is apt to disintegrate at the least doubt or distortion. [28] The insightful gnostic is less likely to be afraid for a bad end. Both of them, if they died in faith, would be chastised except that God may forgo any chastisement beyond rebuke at the accounting.

The duration of the punishment is commensurate with the duration of persistence in sin; its intensity with the ignominy of the major sins; the variety of type with the variety of evil works. At the termination of the period of punishment the tradition-bound dolts will abide in the levels of the Companions of the Right Hand while the gnostics of insight will abide in the highest heights.

It is related: 'The last to leave hellfire will be given such as this whole world (*dunyā*) tenfold.'[a] Do not imagine that the intent is the calculation of the physical area, as one parasang compares to two parasangs or as ten compares to twenty. This would be ignorance of the way parables are coined. Rather, it is like the saying: 'One took from him a camel and gave him ten like it.' Or, 'the camel was worth ten dinars but someone gave him a hundred.'

If one understands the simile only in terms of weight surely, then, the hundred dinars, if placed on one balance of a scale, would not register a relation of one to ten with the camel on the other balance. Nay, it is a comparison of the meanings of bodies and spirits not of their individual existences. The camel is not wanted for its weight, length, breadth or area, but for its monetary worth. Its spirit is its monetary worth, and its body is its flesh and blood. One hundred dinars are equal to it tenfold on the spiritual balances, not on the bodily balances. This can be seen as true by anyone who knows the concept of monetary worth of gold and silver.

If one gave him, however, a jewel whose weight was a mithqāl and whole value was a hundred dinars, and said: 'I gave him the like of ten of it,' he would be correct. Only jewelers, however, would grasp his veracity. For the jeweler's spirit does not comprehend by mere eyesight but by a different sense beyond the eye. Therefore, a youth, especially a villager or bedouin, would deny the statement saying: 'This jewel is but a stone weighing a mithqāl'; the camel weighs a million mithqāls; hence the man lied when he said, 'I gave him tenfold thereof.' In truth, however, it is the youth who is wrong but there is no way to prove it to him, until he be left to mature and become refined, or until he attain in his heart the illumination with which he may grasp the inner worth of gems and other valuables. Then only would the truth be revealed

to him.

The gnostic is unable to make the tradition-bound man, lagging behind, understand how right is the Prophet in this comparison, as the Prophet says, according to traditions: 'Paradise is in the heavens.'[a] The heavens are of this world. How, then, can this world [they say] hold ten of the like? This incapacity is like that of the adult who is unable to make the boy grasp the above-mentioned comparison. The same is true of explaining the matter to the nomad.

Just as one may pity the jeweler when he attempts to enlighten the bedouin and villager concerning the parable, so the gnostic may be pitied when he attempts to enlighten the dullwitted. It is for this reason that the Prophet, God bless him said: 'Have mercy on three: a learned man among the ignorant; the rich man who became poor and the mighty man who was humbled.[b]

For this reason the prophets are pitied from among the people. Their tribulations, because of the people's lack of understanding, are a trial and test for them from God. Such tribulation is assigned them, by eternal pre-ordained decree. This is the meaning of the Prophet's words: 'Tribulation is assigned the prophets, then the saints, and then others rank by rank.'[c]

Do not surmise that the tribulation is like that of Job, an affliction of the body. Indeed, Noah's trial was also great. He suffered from people who the more he called them to turn to God, the more just fled. Therefore, when God's Apostle was troubled by the speech of some he said: 'God had compassion on my brother Moses. Indeed, he was troubled by more than this, yet he endured.'[d]

Thus, the prophets are not free [29] of being afflicted by the unbelievers. Nor are the saints and the learned free of being afflicted by the ignorant. Therefore, the saints are seldom free of [various] types of harm and tribulation: by expulsion from the land, or their being denounced before the authorities, or by accusation of their unbelief and heresy. It is inevitable that the men of gnosis be viewed as unbelievers by the ignorant just as that he who substitutes a small gem for the large camel should be viewed, by the ignorant, as a squanderer and loser.

When you are aware of these points, trust the Prophet's statement: 'The last to leave hellfire will be given the likes of this world tenfold.' Beware lest you limit your belief to that which is perceived through the sense alone, and become a two-legged ass. For the ass shares with you the five senses; you, however, differ from the ass in a divine conscience which has been offered to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but

they refused to carry [the trust] and were afraid of it.[367] Yet, understanding of that which is beyond the sensible world occurs only within the scope of that conscience which distinguishes you from the ass and the other animals. He who overlooks that, disregards and neglects it, and is content with the bestial level, does not transcend the [level] of sensual perceptions, is the one who destroys himself by wrecking his soul, forgetting it by ignoring it. BE NOT AS THOSE WHO FORGOT GOD, AND SO HE CAUSED THEM TO FORGET THEIR SOULS.[368] Anyone who knows no more than is grasped through the five senses has forgotten God, inasmuch as His being cannot be encompassed, in this world, through the senses. But anyone who has forgotten God, is certainly made to forget his own soul, and is lowered to the animal level, and abandons the ascent to the higher horizon.[369] He betrays the trust which God placed with him and bestowed upon him, is ungrateful of His blessings and is risking His rancor, nay his state is worse than that of the beast. For, the beast is redeemed by death.

But man has a trust which shall, certainly, be returned to its consignor. He is the source and end of the consignment. The trust is like the radiant sun, yet, it falls into this evanescent mold and sets in it. At the destruction of this mold this sun will rise from its setting place and return to its creator, either in eclipsing darkness or with brilliant radiance. The brilliant and radiant are not barred from the divine Presence. The darkened also returns to the Presence for God is the source and end of all; only that [the darkened soul] turns its head from the highest heights to the lowest depths. The Koran, therefore, states: IF THOU COULDST SEE THE GUILTY HANDING THEIR HEADS BEFORE THEIR LORD![370] It is clear, then, that they are, before their Lord, in confusion; their faces turned back and their heads lowered. Such is the divine rule for all to whom He has denied success and whom He has not guided on His path. We seek refuge in God from error and from descent to the station of the ignorant. Such is the fate of him who leaves hellfire and is given ten times or more the like of this world. But only a [true] monotheist will leave hellfire. By monotheism I do not refer to the verbal profession: 'there is no god but God'. The tongue is of the temporal world and avails only in the temporal world. [Such verbal profession] removes the sword from man's neck and repels the hands of plunderers from his wealth. [But] security of limb and property [extends only] the duration of life. But as limb and property do not remain, verbalization avails not. On the contrary, sincerity in monotheism avails, and its perfection is that man sees all things as being only of God. Its sign is that

he does not become vexed at any creature in what befalls him, inasmuch as he sees not the means but the Prime Cause, as will be shown in the Book on the Reliance on God.[371]

This monotheism is variegated. There are those whose monotheism is like mountains (*jibāl*); in others, it is only the weight of an ounce (*mithqāl*); still others have only the measure of a mustard seed or grain. He who has in his heart a dinar's weight of faith, will be the first to leave hellfire. It is said in a tradition: 'Those with a dinar's weight of faith, get out of hellfire!'[a] The last to leave is he in whose heart is only a grain of faith. The gamut of degrees between the dinar's weight and the grain [determines the order of] exit from hellfire in between the two extremes. The comparison between the ounce and the grain is, in terms of simile, as we have mentioned in the comparison between property assets and specie.

For the most part, what leads monotheists into hellfire is injustices toward men, for the account of men is that which will not be neglected. As for the remainder of evil deeds, they may be quickly pardoned and atoned. As a tradition has it: Man [30] is brought before God. The man has good deeds [to his credit] the likes of mountains; if they be admitted he is of the people of Paradise. Then the examiners of interpersonal injustices rise: he may have abused someone's dignity, misappropriated someone's property, assaulted someone. These deeds are subtracted[372] from his good deeds until none remain. Then the angels declare: 'O Lord, this man's good deeds are gone and many claims against him remain.'. God proclaims: 'Heap their grievances upon his account, and make out his ticket to hellfire.' Just as he is destroyed by the evil done to another, by way of retribution, so the wronged one is saved by the good deed of the evil-doer who committed the injustice against him. For, it is transferred to him in exchange for the wrong he suffered at the other's hand.

It has been related of Ibn al-Jalā'[373] that one of his brethren slandered him, then, requested his forgiveness. He said: 'I cannot. My ledger has no good in it which is better than this. How, then, can I erase it.' He and others said: 'My brethren's transgressions are of my good deeds with which I intend to adorn my ledger.'

It is this we desired to mention of the variation of man's degrees of happiness and misery in the hereafter.

All this is judgement of external causes, like the decision of the doctor about the patient, that he will certainly die and no treatment will avail, or, about another patient, that his malady is slight and his cure easy. Indeed, that notion is correct in most instances. Yet, sometimes, unbeknownst to the physician, the soul's soundness may return to man close to death. Sometimes, however, the end comes unexpectedly to one who suffers from a light malady. These are God's mysteries, concealed in the living and in the obscurity of causes determined with a certain measure of the Prime Cause, for it is not given to human power to fathom them.

Likewise, salvation and bliss in the hereafter have secret causes beyond the power of human comprehension. That concealed cause leading to redemption is termed pardon and favour, and that leading to destruction is termed wrath and vengeance. Behind this mystery is the eternal divine volition which no creature can comprehend. Thus we must admit the pardon of the rebellious, even if his apparent evil is great, and the wrath upon the obedient, even if his apparent acts of obedience are many.

Indeed, we rely on piety, which is in the heart and it [i.e., the heart] is too obscure to be grasped by its possessor, the more so by another. It has already, however, been revealed to those possessed of hearts that forgiveness comes to man only through a secret reason which accounts for it. Wrath also comes only because of a hidden cause which draws man away from God. If not for that, pardon and wrath would not be recompense for acts and qualities. Were it not recompense it would be unjust, and, if it were unjust, the verses: THY LORD WRONGS NOT HIS SERVANTS;[374] and, SURELY GOD SHALL NOT WRONG SO MUCH AS THE WEIGHT OF A MOTE,[375] would not be correct. Yet all of this is true.

. . . AND THAT A MAN SHALL HAVE TO HIS ACCOUNT ONLY AS HE HAS LABOURED, AND THAT HIS LABOURING SHALL SURELY BE SEEN.[376] EVERY SOUL SHALL BE PLEDGED FOR WHAT IT HAS EARNED.[377] WHEN THEY SWERVED, GOD CAUSED THEIR HEARTS TO SWERVE.[378] And, when they change what is in themselves, God changes that which is in them. This fulfills the verse, GOD CHANGES NOT WHAT IS IN A PEOPLE, UNTIL THEY CHANGE WHAT IS IN THEMSELVES.[379] All this has been revealed to possessors of heart in a manner clearer than visible evidence, inasmuch as eyesight can err, as when, at times, it perceives a distant object as near and a large one as small. But the evidence of the heart cannot err. The point, however, is the opening of the eyesight of the heart and not to imagine falsity in the heart after this development. This is alluded to in the verse, THE HEART LIES NOT OF WHAT HE SAW.[380]

The third level is that of the redeemed. By redemption I mean security only, without felicity or bliss. They are people who have neither

rendered service to be rewarded, not have they failed [so as] to deserve punishment. It seems that this is the state of the insane, the young of the unbelievers, the feeble-minded and those to whom the call to God has not reached due to geographical isolation. They live in ignorance without perception. Their portion is neither knowledge nor unbelief, neither obedience nor rebellion. There is no means that can bring them close to God nor any offence which can turn them away from God. They are not of the people of paradise nor of the people of hellfire. Rather, they are stationed midway between the two. The revelation terms this *A'rāf* (the crest).[381] The existence of some people in this stage[a] is known with certainty from Koran verses, traditions and the lights [31] of various considerations. Essentially, the judgement,[382] for example, that the youth are in this category, is presumed and not known with certainty. Learning about it truly belongs to the sphere of prophecy, and it is unlikely that [men in] the grade of the saints and the scholars would rise to it.

The traditions as regards the youth are also contradictory. When one of the youths died, 'Ā'isha[383] said: 'A bird of the birds of Paradise.' But God's Apostle denied this saying: 'How do you know?'[b] Ambiguity and obscurity, therefore, prevail about this placement.

The fourth level is that of the blessed.[384] They are the gnostics, as distinct from the mere tradition-bound. They are the successful, station near [God]. The tradition-bound, even if he attains, on the whole, a station in Paradise, is of the Companions of the Right Hand but these are the near-stationed, and what they experience is beyond [the possibility of] explanation. The extent of possible explanation is what is detailed in the Koran. There can be no explanation beyond God's. That which cannot be expressed in this world is summed up in the verse: NO SOUL KNOWS WHAT COMFORT IS LAID UP FOR THEM SECRETLY,[385] and, further, in the tradition: 'I have prepared for my righteous servants that which no eye has seen, which no ear has heard, and which has not occurred to the human mind.'[c]

The desire of the gnostics is that state which could not conceivably have occurred to the human mind in this world. As for the houri, palaces, fruit, milk, honey, wine, and jewelry of Paradise, the gnostics do not covet them. Moreover, if these were given to them, they would not be content. They seek only the rapture of gazing at God's countenance. This is the utmost of felicities and the ultimate delight. That is why, when Rābi'a al-'Adawīya[386] was asked: 'What do you long for in Paradise?', she answered, 'first the Neighbour and then the House.'[387] For these are people whose preoccupation with the love of the Master deflects them from taking interest in the house and its embellishment, indeed in anything other than He, even in themselves. They are like the lover who is blindly devoted to his Beloved, whose mind is riveted to gazing at His countenance and thinking of Him. He is in the state of immersion, he is neglectful of himself, not aware of what affects his body. This state is termed the obliteration of self. That means that he becomes immersed in another, and all his concerns become one concern, namely his Beloved. There remains no room in him for anything but his beloved until he pays no attention to either himself or others. This is the state through which, in the hereafter, one attains such delight as is as inconceivable [32] in this world, in anyone's mind, as it cannot be imagined that one deaf and blind would form the notion of colour and melody unless the bar was lifted from (the impairment of) his faculties of hearing and sight. At that point he might understand his condition and know, assuredly, that earlier it was impossible for him to have formed such notions. This life (*dunyā*) is a veil to realization, and with its removal the hidden is revealed. At that point, the flavour of the good life is perceived. SURELY THE LAST ABODE IS LIFE, DID THEY BUT KNOW.[388]

This should suffice in explication of the distribution of degrees [in the hereafter] according to good works.

May God, in His benevolence, grant success.

How Minor Sins are increased

There are circumstances by which minor sins are magnified. Among them are persistence and assiduity. That is why they say: A sin persisted in cannot be minor, and a sin followed by the quest for forgiveness, cannot be major. A major sin can go by and, if it can be imagined that it is not followed by the like, then pardon for such is more likely than for a minor sin in which man persists. A model for this is drops of water falling, continuously, upon a stone until they wear it away. The same amount of water, poured onto the stone all at once, would not produce a like effect. That is why the Apostle of God said: 'best are works that are continuous even if few.'[a]

Matters are clarified through their opposites. If the useful work is the constant, even if it be minor, then the intermittent though numerous works are of little advantage in the illumination and purification of the heart. Likewise, a few evil deeds, if they persist, have great influence in corrupting the heart. Yet, it is hardly imaginable that man storms for the major sin suddenly without antecedents and accessories from the category

of minor sins. Rarely does the adulterer fornicate without enticement and plotting. Rarely, also, does one kill abruptly without previous rancor and enmity. Thus every major sin involves previous and dependent minor ones. If we could imagine a major sin independent and sudden, without recurrence, perhaps pardon of it would be more likely than of a minor sin in which a man persists throughout his life.

Another [source of augmenting sin] is to consider sin minute. Indeed, whenever man himself deems the sin as major, it becomes, in God's view, minor, because the apprehension of its magnitude stems from the heart's aversion to it and loathing of it. This aversion to it restrains the intensity of its influence upon the heart. [Conversely,] considering a sin insignificant stems from habitude which makes for an intense influence on the heart. The heart must be illumined through acts of obedience, and its blackening through evil deeds must be avoided. It, therefore, will not be censured for what befalls it inadvertently. Indeed, the heart is not impressed by what occurs inadvertently. A tradition has it: 'The believer considers his sin a mountain, suspended above him, and fears it may fall upon him; the hypocrite considers his sin a fly which passed by his nose, and is swatted away.'[a] Somebody has said that the sin which is not forgiven is man's saying: 'Were all my sins such as this.'

The sin waxes great in the heart of the believer because of his awareness of God's majesty, and when he contemplates the greatness of Him against whom he rebelled, he sees a minor sin as major. God has revealed to one of His prophets: 'Look not at the insignificance of the gift but, rather, at the greatness of the giver; look not at the smallness of the offense, look rather at the majesty of Him whom you confront with it.' In this sense a gnostic has said: 'There is no minor sin; every offense is major.'

Likewise, a Companion said to the 'Followers': 'Surely you do things which, while in your eyes they are finer than a hair, we, in the time of God's Apostle, would reckon as among the mortal sins.' Since the Companions' perception of God's majesty was more sterling, they considered the minor sins, with regard to God's majesty, as major sins. For the same reason what is a minor sin in the case of an ignoramus, becomes a major sin in the case of a learned man. Matters which are disregarded in the case of a common person, are not so disregarded in the case of an enlightened one, for sin and offense grow in proportion to the perception of the transgressor.

Another cause of the minor sin turning great is delighting in the minor sin, taking pride in it, considering its realization as pleasure, and disregard of its being the cause of misery. The more the sweetness of the minor sin overcomes a man, the more a minor sin becomes major, and its impact in blackening the heart is growing, so that there are even sinners who pride themselves on their sins and boast of them, because of the intensity of their joy at having yielded to them. [33] As if saying: 'Have you not seen how I rent his dignity?' A disputant says: 'Have you now seen how I exposed him, how I brought out his shortcomings to the point of shame, how I scorned him and how I duped him?' A trader says: 'Have you not seen how I sold him the spurious, how I deceived him, how I cheated him of his wealth and how I made a fool of him?' By deeds such as these are minor sins magnified. But sins are destructive. When man is led to them, and Satan has succeeded in inducing him to act that way, then he should be in trouble and regret brought on by the triumph of the Enemy over him and his own remoteness from God.

If a sick person rejoices in the destruction of the vessel containing his medication, just to escape the discomfort pursuant to its consumption, he cannot be expected to be cured.

What also increases a minor sin is that man disdains God's protection of him, His forbearance, and the respite He granted. Man does not grasp that he is given respite out of detestation, so that the offense might increase. He thinks that his ability to sin is a sign of God's concern for him. This is because of his feeling secure from God's devising, and his ignorance of the pitfalls of delusion about God. As it says, AND THEY SAY WITHIN THEMSELVES, 'WHY DOES GOD NOT CHASTISE US FOR WHAT WE SAY?' SUFFICIENT FOR THEM SHALL BE GEHENNA, AT WHICH THEY SHALL BE ROASTED — A WRETCHED LOT.[389] Another case: that he commit a sin and expose it by mentioning it after its commission or committing it in another's presence. Indeed, such is an offense against the protection God lowers upon him and an incitement of the craving for evil in him whom he told of his sin or whom he made witness his action. Two offenses join into his offense to harden it. If encouraging another person to commit that sin, inducing him and involving him, be added it goes into a fourth crime, and it becomes a monstrous affair.

It is recorded in a tradition: 'All men are excused except the declarers. One of them passes the night in sin, and God conceals it, yet he arises and removes divine concealment, and speaks of his sin.'[a] This is because it is of God's attributes and favours that he reveals the good deed, conceals the unsightly and does not rip the protective veil. But exposure [by man] is a repudiation of this grace.

Somebody said: 'Do not sin, but if you cannot avoid sin, never awaken such a desire in another, for then you will have sinned twice.' That is why the Koran states: THE HYPOCRITES, THE MEN AND THE WOMEN, ARE AS ONE ANOTHER: THEY BID TO DISHONOUR AND FORBID HONOUR.[390] An early authority said: 'The gravest violation of a man's reputation is to assist him in committing a sin, and then make him consider it slight.'

Another way of increasing a sin: the sinner be a learned doctor with a following. If his sin is displayed, it increases, e.g., the scholar's donning of silk, riding in golden carriages, taking of doubtful money from rulers, frequenting the company of rulers, encouraging them by withholding report [of their sins], reckless slandering, intemperance in controversy, his design being scorn, and occupying himself with such learning as leads only to glory, e.g., the art of controversy and argumentation. For these are sins in which the doctor will have a following. He dies but his evil remains spreading in the world indefinitely. Blessed is he whose sins die with him. A tradition says: 'He who enacts an evil practice bears its burden as well as that of anybody practicing it, his responsibility not reduced at all.'[a]

God has said: AND WE WRITE DOWN WHAT THEY HAVE FORWARDED AND WHAT THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND.[391] What 'is left behind' refers to those acts which continue after the expiration of the deed and the doer.

Ibn 'Abbās[392] said: 'Woe to the scholar from his followers; he slips but goes right yet people carry the error far away.' Somebody said: 'The error of the learned doctor is like a shipwreck, it sinks and its passengers drown.'

In the 'Isrā'īliyāt[393] [it occurs]: 'There was a scholar who misguided people into unlawful innovation, then was overtaken by repentance and acted toward correction over a lifetime. God then revealed to their prophet: "Say to him: 'If your sin were only in that which is between Me and thee, I would surely forgive it. However, what about those of My servants thou hast misled and hast plunged into hellfire?' " '

Thus it becomes clear that the position of learned doctors is grave. They have two obligations; first abandonment of sin and, secondly, concealment of it. Just as their responsibility for sins is compounded, so is their recompense for good deeds emulated by their following.

If the doctor abandons [the search for] affectation and the affection for the mundane world; is satisfied with little thereof, as well as with little food and apparel against the elements; and is followed in this by leading scholars and the rank and file, he will enjoy the likes of their reward. If, however, he leans toward imitating him, they will be able to attain success only in the service of rulers [34] and the gathering of scraps from unlawful wealth. For all this he will be responsible. Thus the behaviour of the scholars is compounded manyfold, be it in merit or demerit, in gain or less.

So much for the details of the sins for which repentance is effected.

THE THIRD PILLAR: ON THE FULLNESS, REQUISITES AND PERMANENCE OF REPENTANCE

We have already mentioned that repentance consists of regret which leads to determination and resolution. This regret is itself caused by knowledge that the offenses are a barrier between man and his Beloved. Each of these - knowledge, regret and determination — has permanence and fullness. Its fullness has a mark, and its permanence has requisites, all to be clarified.

As for knowledge, examination of it is a study of the cause of repentance; its strengthening and its perfection by factors such as the company of the virtuous, attendance of the dhikrs,[394] questioning about the fatal impact of transgressions and about the punishment they may bring on in this world. But cleaving to a shaykh is more useful than all this; indeed it is the efficacious remedy. It will be discussed later on.[395]

As for regret, it is the heartache when man discerns that the Beloved has been missed. It is marked by long grief and sorrow, tears flowing and much weeping.[396]

One who becomes aware of torment afflicting his child or one of his dear ones, his grief and weeping are protracted. And, who is dearer to a person than himself, what punishment is severer than hellfire, what is more indicative of the descent of punishment than sins, and [,finally,] what announcer is more reliable than God and His Apostle?

If a man was told by one called physician that his child would not recover from his illness and would die thereof, surely his grief would be aroused. Yet, his child is not dearer than himself, nor is the physician more knowledgeable or more reliable than God and His Apostle, death not more severe than hellfire and sickness not more indicative of death than sins are of God's wrath and the risk of hellfire.

The stronger the anguish of regret, the more likely is the expiation of sin through it. The sign of the sincerity of regret is the mellowness of the heart and the profusion of tears. It is said in a tradition: 'Sit with

the contrite, for their hearts are the most mellow.'[a] A sign thereof is that instead of the sweetness of those sins, their bitterness seizes man's heart, and inclination turns into loathing, desire into aversion.

It is stated in the 'Isrā'īlīyāt that Almighty God said to one of His prophets who had asked that the repentance of a certain man be accepted after he had strived in vain for years in worship: 'By My power and majesty, if the hosts of heaven and earth interceded, I would still not accept his repentance, for the sweetness of that sin, of which he repents, yet lurks in his heart.'

You might say:

Sins by nature are agreeable acts. How, then, can one find bitterness in them?

I say:

One who partakes of honey containing a poison, and does not discover it by taste, and relishes it, but afterwards falls ill, his illness and its pain progress, his hair falls out and his limbs are left paralyzed, — should honey containing a like substance, be set before him, even if he is in an extreme state of hunger and urge for sweetness, would his soul shun such honey or not? If you answer negatively, such answer would be a denial of the evident and of experience.

Rather, it is possible that even uncontaminated honey would be avoided because of its similarity to the other. That is how the penitent may have the sensation of the bitterness of sin. This is brought on by his knowledge that the taste of every sin may be the taste of honey yet its effect is that of poison. Repentance is not sincere or true without such belief. As such belief is rare, repentance and penitence are rare. You see only such as turn away from God, think lightly of sins, and persist in them.

This is a requisite for the fullness of remorse, and must be constant unto death.

Man must find such bitterness in all sins, even if he has never committed them before, just as one who consumed poison contained in honey feels aversion to fresh water as soon as he learns that it contains a similar poison, since the harm was not from the honey but rather from what it contained. Likewise, the damage that afflicts the penitent from his theft or fornication does not stem from the nature of the act itself but rather from its being a rebellion against God's command. This applies to every sin.

As for the resolution which emerges therefrom, it is the will to correction and it has a connection with the present. It entails renouncing anything prohibited which he practiced, and the fulfillment of every obligation which faces him in the present. This has a connection with the past, namely correction of what has preceded; and a connection with the future, namely continued obedience and permanent renunciation of sin unto death.

The requisite of the sincerity of repentance, as far as the past is concerned, is that man should turn his thought back to the first day when he came of age or attained virility, and scrutinize his past [35] life, year by year, month by month, day by day and moment by moment. He should review, in what acts of obedience he was remiss and to which sins he yielded.

If he missed a prayer or performed it while wearing an impure garment or not with the proper intent because he was unaware that the intention is a requisite of prayer, he should perform it in full. If he has doubts as to the number of prayers missed, computing from the period of his attaining majority, subtracting the number of prayers which he feels sure he had performed, he should perform the remainder. He may use common sense, and he will attain the right figure by way of inquiry and careful reckoning.

As for fasting, if he had neglected it during a journey, if he broke the fast intentionally or forgot the proper intention at night and did not make it up, he should, after most careful computation, busy himself with making it up.

As for alms, he should compute his total wealth and the number of years that elapsed since he acquired it. (The computation is not made from the time of his attaining majority, for alms are due even on the property of a youth.) He then discharges that which he feels he probably owes. Further, if he discharged it in a manner inconsistent with his rite, as not having disbursed to all the eight categories or discharged an alternate[397] while he is of the Shāfi'ī rite,[398] he should execute all that; otherwise it is not fully satisfactory. The computation of alms and the knowledge of this matter is protracted, and requires lucid consideration. He may have to consult the jurists on how to settle the matter.

As for the pilgrimage, if one had been able, over the years, but his departure did not come to pass, and presently he has become destitute, he still should go on the pilgrimage. If, considering his destitution, he is unable, he must acquire, by licit means, enough for provisions. If he has no means of acquisition nor means, he should request people to grant him from the zakāt or charitable funds, the necessary sum for the pilgrimage. If he dies before performing the pilgrimage, he dies in transgression. The Prophet said: 'One who dies without having made the

pilgrimage, might as well die a Jew or a Christian.'[a] Accidental inability succeeding a state of capacity does not cancel man's obligation of pilgrimage.

Such is the way for a man to examine acts of obedience and to correct them.

As for sins, he should trace his hearing, eyesight, tongue, stomach, hand, foot, pudendum and the rest of him limbs, from the beginning of his majority, then look through all his days and hours and detail to himself a record of his transgressions until they all are established, the minor and the major, and he should sift them. Some of them are between God and himself, i.e., do not entail injustice to man. This includes such acts as gazing at a woman unlawful to the man, sitting in a mosque despite a major ritual impurity, touching a Koran before performing an ablution, entertaining a heresy, drinking wine, listening to entertainment, etc., all unconnected with harm to another person.

Repentance of these comes through remorse and contrition, also by reckoning their measure as regards magnitude and duration, and seeking for each of these sins a corresponding good deed. He performs good deeds in proportion to the measure of the transgressions relying on the Prophet's saying: 'Fear God wherever you be and follow an evil deed with a good one to wipe it out.'[b] God, moreover, has said: . . . SURELY THE GOOD DEEDS WILL DRIVE AWAY THE EVIL DEEDS.[399]

Listening to entertainments is atoned by listening to the recitation of the Koran and dhikr sessions. Sitting in a mosque in an impure state is atoned by retreat at a mosque for engaging in worship. Touching the Koran while unclean is atoned by deference to the Koran, extensive reading from it, kissing if often, and[400] by making a copy of the Book and making it an endowment. The consumption of wine is atoned by charitable donation of a licit beverage which is better and liked by him.

It is impossible to enumerate all the transgressions. The object, however, is treading the opposite path. Illness is cured by its opposite. Every stain, which arose upon the heart through transgression can be erased only by an illumination raised upon it through an opposite good deed. These opposites are proportionate to one another. Therefore, each evil should be expunged with a good of its own kind but opposite in effect. White is cancelled by black, not by heat or cold. This classification and verification are subtleties toward expunging transgression. Expectation is so justified, trust [36] so great that one should not persist in one variety of worship, even though this too is effective in expunging sin.

Such is the rule concerning sins of man towards God. That a thing is atoned by its opposite is indicated by [the Tradition] that the love of the mundane is the beginning of all error, and that the effect, in the heart, of the pursuit of the mundane is delight in it and craving for it. Since faced with anxieties and worries the heart shuns the world, certainly any hurt which befalls the Muslim and draws his heart away from the mundane, will serve as an atonement.

The Prophet said: 'There are sins for which only anxieties atone.'[a] And, according to another version, 'only the anxiety in the search of a livelihood.' A tradition of 'Ā'isha:[401] 'When man's sins multiply and he has no works by which to atone for them, God brings upon him anxieties, that should become atonement for his sins.'[b] It is said that the anxiety which enters the heart, while man is unaware, is the strain of sins, and the worry about them, the feelings of the heart at the eve of Reckoning and the terror of the day of Resurrection.

You might say:

Man worries mostly about his wealth, children and status. This is [in itself] an error. How, then, will it be an atonement?

Know then that love for these is an error, and deprivation of these is an atonement. If man savoured it, the error set in. It has been related that Gabriel entered unto Joseph in the prison.

— 'How was my poor father when you left him?'
— 'He grieved for you with the sorrow of a hundred bereaved mothers.'
— 'What has he, then, with God?'
— 'The reward of a hundred martyrs.'

Thus, anxieties also atone for sins against God. This is the rule concerning sins against God.

As for injustices towards one's fellow-men, they too include felony and transgression of God's due. For God has also forbidden the wronging of one's fellow. The correction of such, insofar as they pertain to God's due, is achieved through remorse, contrition, renunciation of similar acts in the future, and the performance of good deeds counted as opposites of the sins. The penitent will requite with benevolence toward men for the hurt he may have caused them.

Illegal seizure of their property he will atone by charitable works from his lawfully held property. Degrading their dignity by slander and vilification will be atoned through praise for co-religionists, telling people of what the penitent knows of the good qualities of one's fellow etc. The taking of life is atoned by manumission of slaves. For this is like giving life, since the slave is lost to himself, and exists only for his master.

Manumission, therefore, is a creation, the maximum of creation man is capable of. The destruction [of life] is countered by the creation [of life]. By this you learn that what we have discussed of following the path of opposites in atonement and annulment, is attested to in the Law, as the atonement for slaying is the manumission of slaves.[402] But, even if he did all that, it would not be sufficient so long as he has not turned away from injustice to men, be it against life, or property, or dignity, or heart, I mean sheer hurt.

As for matters of life, if a man happened to slay by error, then his repentance is by compensation, through conceding the blood money, either from him or his clan, and its reaching the entitled party. Such is his responsibility until the delivery has been executed. If the murder was committed intentionally, and retaliation was due, then repentance is through [being ready to suffer] retaliation. If he was not identified, he must reveal himself to the avenger who will decide about his life: [the avenger] may forgive him or kill him. Only by such means is the killer's responsibility fulfilled. Concealment is not permitted.

This is not like his having fornicated, drunk wine, stolen, robbed or had part in an illicit affair for which legal punishment under the divine law had been stipulated, for, these cases do not require that the penitent publicly compromise himself, disclose himself or seek, from the ruler, the application of the sacred law. Rather, he should avail himself of God's protection, and carry out God's declared punishment upon himself by various sorts of effort and chastisement. Pardon, in the case of sins toward God alone, is nigh unto the contrite penitents.

If, however, he submits his case to the authorities and the prescribed punishment is imposed, he did his duty; his repentance is sound and accepted by God. This is attested to by what is related of Mā'iz b. Mālik, who came to the Prophet and said: 'O Apostle of God, I have stained my soul and fornicated, and I desire that you cleanse me!' The Prophet then turned him away. The next day Mā'iz approached the Prophet: 'O Apostle of God, I have fornicated!' Again the Prophet turned him away. When Mā'iz came the third time, the Prophet took up his case, a pit was dug for Mā'iz, [37] then the Prophet gave the order, the man was stoned. People, in this matter, were of two opinions. Some said: 'He perished as his crime engulfed him.' Others said: 'No repentance is more sincere than his.' But the Apostle of God said: 'His repentance surely would, if divided, suffice for a whole people.'[a]

A woman of the Ghāmid clan came and said: 'O Apostle of God, I have committed adultery, cleanse me!' The Prophet turned her away.

Then, on the morrow, she said: 'O Apostle of God, why do you turn me away? Do you reject me as you did Mā'iz? By God, I am pregnant!' The Prophet said: 'As for now, go away until you bear the child.' When she gave birth she came with an infant boy wrapped in a tatter and said: 'Here, this is the child I bore.' 'Go away and nurse him until he is weaned.' Then, when she weaned him she came with the infant, and in his hand was a piece of bread. 'O Prophet of God, I have weaned him and he has already tasted food.' The child was given over to a man from among the Muslims. The Prophet gave command, she was buried unto the chest, and stoned. Khālid b. al-Walīd[403] approached with a stone and cast it upon her head. The blood splashed upon his face and he cursed her. The Apostle of God heard him reviling her, and said: 'Easy, Khālid, by Him in whose hand my soul is, she has certainly repented in such a fashion that if the tax collector repented like her, he would be forgiven.' After which he issued instructions [for the matter's disposition], prayed for her and she was buried.[a]

As for retaliation and the punishment of false accusation, the one responsible must expiate his guilt before the one in the right. If the subject is property grasped through unlawful seizure, treachery, or swindle in business matters by means of fraud, such as sale of spurious goods, concealing a defect in the goods sold, undercutting a workman's wage or withholding his wages, all this requires investigation, not from the limit of a man's maturity but from his earliest ւ ys. That which is due from a youth's property, the youth, upon his attaining majority, must pay if the trustee failed to do so. If he does not do this, be becomes a transgressor liable for it. For the youth and the adult are equal as regards monetary claims.

Let man, then, be careful of the smallest sums from the first day of his life until the day of his repentance, before he is held responsible on the Day of Judgement. Let him examine before he is examined. One who is not careful of this world, his accounting is protracted in the next.

If his total obligation is, most plausibly and with all possible effort, summed up, let him write it down. Let him, also, record the names of the wronged, one by one, and travel around the world seeking them, to expiate his guilt before them or give them satisfaction. Such repentance is hard on the sinners and the merchants, as they are unable to seek out all their business contacts or the heirs of these. Each one, however, must do as much as is within his power. If he is unable, there remains for him only the path of a profusion of good works that, on the Day of Resurrection, will prove abundant, so that they will be taken and placed

on the scales of the wronged claimants. The abundance of his good deeds, however, is measured against his wrongdoings. But if his good works do not counterbalance them, he will be saddled with some evils of the wronged claimants, so that he will perish by the evil of others.

Such is the path, for every penitent, of repelling the claims of the wronged. This necessitates the investment of a lifetime in good deeds, commensurate with the duration of unjust behaviour. How is this possible when it involves an unknown quantity? And perhaps the end is near? Time being limited, he must be more energetic in accumulating good deeds than he was in gathering sin over extended time. Such is the rule concerning injustices upon his conscience.

As for his actual possessions, let him return to the rightful owner that which is known to belong to that owner. Property, whose rightful owner is not known, should be distributed charitably. If lawful possessions become mixed up with unlawful ones, he must do his best to learn the amount of the illicit property, and distribute charity in that amount, as has been specified earlier in the Book of the Lawful and the Unlawful.[404]

As for such verbal offense against the heart, as having tormented people or defamed them,[405] he must seek out everyone who suffered from his tongue or whose heart be hurt by his actions, and seek to expiate his sins with each, one by one. If one has died or disappeared, that matter is forfeit, and correction is possible only through augmenting good deeds to be accepted as substitutes at Judgement. If he finds a claimant who releases his guilt in good faith, then that is his atonement. The penitent must put his offense and opposition before the claimant, [38] for ambiguous pardon is insufficient.[406] Perhaps, if [the wronged party] were to know [all] that, and the magnitude of the offense against him, he would not be inclined to forgiveness, and would store [the violation] until Judgement Day, subtracting it then from the penitent's good deeds or loading it upon his evil record. If the penitent's offense against others includes anything that, were it mentioned or made known, would hurt the wronged person, such as the penitent's fornicating with the wronged person's slave girl or relative, or verbal reference by the penitent to some secret failings, the pain may be increasing however the penitent sought to induce him. Then the penitent's path in search of pardon, is blocked. There remains, then, naught save to seek release from his guilt. Still a guilt will remain. Let him seek to compensate for it through good deeds as in the case of the injustices against those now dead or missing.

[Injurious] remark and characterization, again, is a new evil from which

expiation must be sought. Whenever the penitent mentions his offense and announces it to the aggrieved, yet [the latter's] soul does not permit expiation, the penitent's guilt remains. Such is the right of the aggrieved. The penitent must, therefore, subtly win him over, act in his interests, and show love and solicitude such as would take sway over his heart. Indeed, man yields to[407] beneficence. Everyone who feels aversion to an evil may be swayed by a good deed. When [the aggrieved man's] heart recovers, through the abundance of [the sinner's] affection and solicitude, he will permit himself pardon. If he persist in refusal, the sinner's solicitude and pleas are counted among his good deeds which, at Judgement, will possibly make good for his offense. Let his effort at gladdening the other's heart through tenderness be as great as it was in inflicting harm, or surpass it. At Judgement, this will be taken as his compensation, according to the divine judgement. This is similar to one who, in this world, has damaged property, then offered the equivalent [in reparation], but the owner declined to accept it or absolve him, and the Judge then ordered the owner to accept whether he wanted to or not. That is how God will decree on the Day of Judgement.

In both Ṣaḥīḥs[408] it is related, in the name of 'Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī,[409] that the Prophet said: "There was, in the past, a man who had killed ninety-nine persons. He inquired after the wisest man upon the earth, and was directed to a monk. He came to the monk and asked: 'One has killed ninety-nine people, is there [a possibility] of repentance for him?' 'No.' The man then killed the monk, completing, thereby, the number of his victims — a hundred. Then he again sought the wisest man in the land, was directed to a learned man, to whom he said: 'One has killed a hundred men, is there repentance for him?' 'Yes,' was the reply, 'who prevents him from repenting? Go to such and such a land, where people[410] serve God, worship with them, and do not return to your land, for it is an evil land.' He set out on the road but midway death overtook him. Then the angels of mercy argued over him with the angels of chastisement. The angels of mercy said: 'He came as a penitent, in his heart directed toward God.' 'He has never done any good,' retorted the angels of chastisement. An angel, in human form, approached, and they appointed him to judge between them. He said: 'Measure the distance to the two lands; he belongs to the one which is nearer.' They measured, and found him nearer the land he sought. So the angels of mercy seized hold of him.'[a] According to another version, 'he was closer to the righteous city by a span of the hand, so he became one of it.' In yet another, 'God urged this side to move away and the other side to

draw near, then said: Measure what is between them. They found the man closer to the one by a span; he was forgiven.'

From this you may learn that there is no salvation except through the preponderance of good deeds and even to an atom's measure. The penitent must show an abundance of good deeds. Such is the rule of intent as far as the past is concerned.

As to the determination linked to the future, it consists of man giving a firm undertaking to God, and contracting with Him a firm covenant not to repeat such sins nor their like. This is like the man who, in his sickness, knows that a fruit, for example, will cause him harm. He resolves, with determination, that he will not partake of the fruit so long as he remains ill. This resolution is immediately imperative, even though it can be imagined that craving will overcome him next. One is not, however, a penitent so long as he has not firmed up the resolution in the present. It is inconceivable that a penitent should succeed therein, at the start, except by means of solitude, silence, reducing food and sleep to a minimum, and sticking to lawful nourishment.

If he has lawfully inherited wealth, or a craft by which he can acquire a sufficient amount, let him be content with it. [39] The beginning of all sin is the consumption of the forbidden. How can one be penitent while persisting therein, not content with the lawful and abstinence from the doubtful, unable to give up the cravings for food and raiment? Someone said: 'He who is sincere in giving up desire and conquered himself for God's sake seven times, is no longer afflicted by that desire.' Another said: 'He who has repented from sin and kept to the straight seven years, will never return to it.' The penitent, if he is not learned, should learn what is incumbent upon him in the future and what is forbidden, so that he be able to cleave to uprightness.

Unless man chooses solitude his uprightness is incomplete, even though he may have renounced some sins. Such is the case of him who renounces, for example, drinking wine, fornication, homosexual relation,[411] or usurpation, yet this is not full repentance.

Some people said that this repentance is not valid, while others have said that it is. Validity, in this context, is a vague expression. We would say to one who holds it to be invalid: If you mean by this that his abstention from certain sins is of no avail at all, that its incidence amounts to the same as its absence, then great indeed is your error. We know that a maximum of sin causes a maximum of punishment, and that a minimum of sin leads to a minimum of punishment. To one who asserts the validity [of such repentance] we say: If you mean thereby that renunciation of some sins is necessarily accepted and will lead to salvation or bliss, this, also, is an error. Salvation and bliss come with total abstention from sin. Such is the direct sense. We are not speaking of the subtle secrets of divine forgiveness. If he, who takes the position that such repentance is invalid, says: I mean thereby that repentance amounts to remorse; man feels remorse for theft, for example, as a transgression and not as theft per se. It is impossible that he regret it without [regretting also] fornication, so long as his grief is due to sin being a transgression, for, both have a common cause. A man who grieves over the murder of his child by sword would also grieve over the child's death by knife, because his grief is due to the death of his beloved, whether by sword or knife. Likewise man grieves over missing his Beloved, which occurs through transgression, be it by theft or fornication. How does he grieve over one but not the other? Remorse is a state brought on by the knowledge that transgression, as such, alienates the Beloved.

It is, therefore, inconceivable that it would be so in the cause of some transgressions and not of others. For, if this were possible, it would be conceivable that one repent drinking wine from one jug but not from another. Yet, such is impossible, for the transgression, in both cases, is one, and the jugs are [merely] circumstantial. In the same way, the particular transgressions are [mere] tools of transgression [per se], while transgression, insofar as it is disobedience, is one and the same.

The meaning, therefore, of the invalidity is that God has promised the penitents a rank, and this rank can be achieved only through remorse, but remorse over [only] some of these identical [sins] is not imaginable. It is like the case of a property which is predicated upon offer and acceptance: if the offer and acceptance do not take place, we say that the contract is not valid, i.e., that the result, which is the disposition of property, does not occur. This is confirmed by the fact that the result of mere abstention is the elimination of the punishment for the sin given up. The yield of remorse, however, is the atonement of past sin. Remorse over theft atones but not abstention alone. Remorse can only be conceived [as referring to an act's] being a transgression. This applies to all sin. This is an exposition of the opinion of those who deny the soundness [of partial abstention from sin], and an explanation of the denial. It is a clear opinion, which a fair man examines in detail thereby eliminating obscurity.[412]

We also assert that repentance of some sins may mean repentance either of major sins without regard for the minor ones, or of minor without regard for the major, or of one major sin rather than another.

As for the repentance of major sins without repentance of the minor, it is within the realm of the possible. It is known that the major sins are greater in God's view and are more apt to arouse God's displeasure and wrath. But it is easier to obtain pardon for minor sins. It is not inconceivable, then, for one to repent the greater and feel remorse about them. This is as he who commits an offense against the family of a king and his women and also an offense against his animal. He is fearful about the former offense while he thinks little of the latter. Remorse follows in proportion to the notion about the magnitude of the sin and the conviction that it alienates from God. It is possible to find this in the Law. Many have been the penitents in past ages and not one of them was infallible. Repentance does not call for infallibility.

The physician might caution the patient strongly about honey. He might also caution him, to a lesser degree, against sugar, in a manner that the patient will feel that the harm of sugar might never materialize. The patient might then give up, by doctor's order, honey but not sugar. Such a situation is not at all impossible. If he consumed them both, because of his craving, he might regret having consumed the honey but not the sugar.

Secondly, it is possible that the man repent some major sins and not others, due to his belief that some sins of that degree are more severe and vicious [40] in God's eyes. One may renounce murder, robbery, tyranny and injustices to men because he knows that the human record is not neglected, while pardon for acts which are between man and God is readily achieved. Just as there is disparity between major and minor sins, so it is also possible to differentiate among the major sins themselves, and in the evaluation of the perpetrator. For that reason one might renounce [only] some major sins which are not directed against one's fellow-man. For example, one may renounce wine imbibing but not fornication, since it becomes clear to him that wine is the key to vice, and that [after consuming the wine] he loses his lucidity, he is apt to commit all sins unknowingly. As wine imbibing is graver in his opinion, a fear is aroused in him which forces him to renounce wine in the future and to regret its consumption in the past.

Thirdly, one may renounce a minor sin or some minor sins while persisting in a major sin, with full knowledge of its being a major sin. One may renounce slander, glancing at a woman forbidden, or something of the same order, while persisting in drinking wine. The way this is possible is that any believer is afraid of his sins and more or less regretful of having committed them. Yet, the delight from that sin can be

stronger than the heartache brought on by this fear, as factors of ignorance and neglect lead to the weakening of the fear, or due to factors which strengthen craving. Contrition exists but it is neither constant nor strong enough to actuate resolution. If, however, he is free from a craving stronger than he, so that he is master of the drives encountered, fear overcomes the craving, conquers it, and it imposes renunciation of that transgression.

Perhaps the voracity of the sinner for wine intensifies and he is not able to endure it. He also has somewhat of a desire for slander and defamation of people or for glancing at females. His fear of God has reached the point of taming this weaker drive, although not the stronger one. The element of fear then forces the emergence of determination toward abstention. This sinner, however, says to himself: If Satan vanquishes me through the overpowering desire for some sins, it is not proper that I throw off all restraint or let down the reins totally; rather, I shall fight him in some sins, and perhaps I shall prevail over him, and my victory over him in resisting some sin will be an atonement for some of my sins. Were we not to imagine this we would not be able to conceive of the sinner as praying or fasting. One would have to say to him: 'If your prayer is to other than God, it is of no avail, and if it is to God, renounce your depravity. God's command, in all this, is one. It is inconceivable that your prayer intends to achieve closeness to God so long as you do not draw near through abandonment of depravity.'

It would be absurd that he should say to God: 'I am under two commandments and, upon disobedience, I face two penalties. I am able to vanquish Satan over one but am failing to do so about the other. I shall vanquish him as far as I can, and I pray that this may atone for some of my failure due to my excessive craving.' But how is such unthinkable when it is the condition of every Muslim? For any Muslim combines obedience to God and disobedience for no other reason than this. If one understood this, he would understand that the victory of fear over craving for some sins, is quite possible.

When fear pertains to past action it causes remorse. Remorse, then, induces resolution. The Prophet has said: Remorse is repentance. This does not stipulate contrition of all sin. He said: 'One who renounces a sin is as one who has never sinned.' He did not say: 'One who renounces all sins.' These concepts clarify the wrongness of the assertion that partial repentance is impossible due to the essential similarity of the appetites and the equal exposure to divine wrath.

Yes, it is possible that one renounces drinking wine (*khamr*) and does

not renounce drinking *nabīdh*[413] because of the disparity between them in the exposure to wrath. One might renounce many sins and not renounce a few, for if the sins are numerous, the effect is to augment punishment. This augments the punishment for the sinful urge to the extent that man fails to oppose it. Some of the urge is left then to divine judgement. Man then is like the ill person who was warned, by the physician, of fruit. He might take in some little amount without doing so in excess. It follows from this that he cannot renounce a thing without renouncing anything similar. It is inescapable that that which he renounced is incompatible with his behaviour, either in the severity of the transgression or the victory of the craving. When this discrepancy affects the belief of the penitent, one can conceive the variation, in this state, of fear and remorse as well as of renunciation. Even though he has not obeyed God in all command and prohibitions, his contrition over that sin, and his loyalty to his resolution to abstain, sets him in the category of him who has not sinned.

You might ask:

Can an impotent renounce fornication to which he yielded before the incidence of impotence?

I would say:

No. For renunciation means remorse [41] which induces the determination to abstain from that action which he is able to commit. But a deed man cannot execute is gone of itself, not as a result of abstention therefrom. I say, however: if, after impotence, illumination and realization occur to him, he is convinced of the harm of fornication to which he yielded, and heartache, remorse and suffering are so aroused in him, that should a desire for coition remain in him, searing remorse would tame and master that desire, I would hope that such would atone for his sin, wipe out his evil deed. For it is beyond doubt that had be repented before the onset of impotence and died following repentance, he would be among the penitents. Even if a situation does not arise in which his craving is stimulated, and in which it can be satisfied, yet, he is penitent in that his contrition has attained such a level as would deflect him from fornication were his desire to surface. It is, therefore, not unthinkable that the strength of contrition should, in the case of an impotent man, reach such a level, albeit while it is not known to himself. Everyone who does not crave for something considers himself capable of renouncing it, through minimal fear, while God is aware of his conscience and the measure of his contrition. Perhaps God will accept it from him; nay, it seems He will.

The truth in all this goes back to the fact that the stain of transgression is effaced from upon the heart by two things: 1) the searing contrition and 2) the intensity of the effort to abstain from sin in the future. With the termination of craving, effort ceases. Yet, it is not inconceivable that contrition would wax to such an extent that it obliterates the craving without the inner struggle. If not for this we might say that repentance is not accepted unless the penitent live for a time struggling with that same craving many times after repenting. Yet the literal sense of the Law does not point at all to such a condition.

You might say:

If we postulated two penitents, one having lost all urge to sin, and the other retaining it while fighting against it and blocking it, which, then, would be the better?

Know, then, that this is subject to difference of opinion among the learned doctors. Aḥmad b. Abī al-Ḥawārī and the companions of Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī[414] opined: The fighter is better since, in addition to repentance, he has the merit of striving (*jihād*). The doctors of Basra, however, taught: The other one is the better, for, if he becomes lax in his repentance, he will still be nearer to being faultless than the struggler who is liable to relax in his struggle. Each school's tenet contains some truth but fails to encompass the full truth.

The truth of the matter is that one whose urge has been discontinued can be in two [possible] states: firstly, that the discontinuance of the longing is due merely to a relaxation in the craving itself. Then the struggler is better than the one in this state inasmuch as his abstention through struggle is indicative of self-control and the conquest of his drives by his faith, which is a trenchant proof of the strength of conviction and belief. By strength of belief I mean the will-power emerging at the direction of certainty, and taming the craving which emerges at the direction of the demons. The struggle decidedly points to these two powers. The statement [of the Basrans] that this one is more secure, since if he is lax he will still not return to sin, is correct, but the use of the term 'better', in this context, is a mistake. This is like saying that the impotent is better than the virile for he is secure of the peril of lust, or, that the youth is better than the adult for he is more secure [from sin], or, that the weakling is better than the king, who is victorious over his enemies, for the weakling has no enemies while the king, though having been victorious many times, might, sometime, be defeated. These are the words of a man, sound of heart but lacking in understanding of worldly affairs, unaware that glory lies in facing perils and grandeur is conditioned upon

defying dangers. One may say that the hunter who has no horse or dog is better in the art of hunting and of higher rank than one who possesses a horse and a dog, for he is safe of the bolting of his horse, and of breaking his limbs when he falls to the ground; he is safe, also, from being bitten and attacked by the dog. This, however, is an error. On the contrary, the owner of a horse and dog, if he is strong and knows how to control them, is better off and more likely to succeed in the hunt.

The second state is to thwart the longing by virtue of the strength of conviction and the sincerity of the preceding struggle as it reaches the point of taming the fury of the craving until it is controlled by the discipline of the Law, so that it is activated only by a directive the faith and, because of the dominance of the faith over it, it lies dormant. This is a higher grade than that of the struggler who endures the fury of desire and of curbing it. The statement that such a person has not the merit of striving *(jihād)* fails to grasp the goal of striving, as if [42] striving were an end unto itself. But the end is the elimination of the greed of the enemy lest it should drag you into his cravings. If he fails in his effort to involve you, he will not impede you in following the path of religion. Once you have subdued him and attained the goal, you are victorious, while so long as you continue to strive you are yet in the pursuit of victory. Compare one who has vanquished the enemy and enslaved him, as against one who is engaged in fighting on the battle line and does not know how he will fare. Or, take a man who has taught a dog to hunt, has trained the horse, both staying with him[415] after the dog has lost its voracity and the horse its recalcitrance, and compare him with one who is yet engaged in the difficult animal training. Some people have gone astray on this point, and considered that the struggle is, itself, the ultimate goal. They did not grasp that the struggle is conducted in order to get rid of the impediments on the Way. Others, again, considered that the total curbing and elimination of the desires is an end unto itself, so that one tried that,[416] and failed therein. he then said: 'This is absurd.' He then rejected the Law, and followed the road of licentiousness abandoning himself to the pursuit of [his] passions. All of that is ignorance and error, as we have established that in the Book on the Discipline of the Soul in the volume on the Destructive Matters.[417]

Were you to ask:

What do you say of two penitents, one who forgot sin, did not engage in sinful thoughts, and the other who held sin in full view of his eyes, constantly reflecting on it, and then burning in contrition. Which of the two is better?

Know, then, that this is also subject to controversy. One says: 'True repentance is that you set your sin before your eyes.' The other says: 'True repentance is to forget your sin.' We consider each school correct but in relation to two [different] situations.

The speech of the mystics is always deficient. Indeed, the usage of each of them is to relate only his own [mystic] experience, another's does not concern him. The answers they give differ, therefore, according to the variation in [mystic] experiences. This is a shortcoming as regards mood, will and depth, inasmuch as the person in question is limited in view to his own experience, the other's state being of no concern to him. For his path is to God Himself and to mystic experiences. Man's path to God may be knowledge. But the paths to God are many, even though they differ as to proximity to or remoteness from God. Though they share divine guidance in common, only God knows who is the best guided of them.

I maintain:

To muse of the sin, remember it, and be distressed by it is an accomplishment in the case of the novice. If he were to forget it, his vexation would not increase nor would his will and urge to follow the Way be strengthened, for then he would be left without the grief and the fear which impedes his reverting to similar sins. For the heedless, this is an accomplishment but for the [mystic] traveler — a deficiency. It is an occupation which prevents from following the Way. The mystic must not swerve from the path, and if he makes progress, and the illumination of gnosis and the shimmering of the mystery is revealed to him, it will engross him, and no scope will remain for attention to previous experiences. This is an accomplishment. But if the traveler to a certain city is hampered on the road by an obstructing river, his trouble, in fording it, is prolonged because he had previously destroyed his bridge. Should he sit on the banks of the river after fording it, and weep, lamenting his destruction of the bridge, this would constitute an additional hindrance engaging him after coping with the first. Truly, if the time was not right for departure, either because it was night and the going was, therefore, impractical, or because there are rivers on the road, and he is fearful of crossing them, let his weeping and sadness, over the destruction of the bridge, go on through the night, so that in the prolonging of grief, his determination not to return to such a situation, will be confirmed. If such admonition has produced in him inner strength not to revert, then it is more appropriate for him to follow the path rather than engage in recounting the destruction of the bridge and weeping over it.

This is known only to one who understands the path, the goal, the barrier and the way to pursue. We have already alluded to this in the Book of Knowledge[418] and in the volume on the Destructive Matters of Life.[419]

We must, however, say that the prerequisite for the constancy of repentance is that man meditate much on the delights of Paradise to augment his longing. If, however, he is a youth, he should not ponder and muse of all that parallels worldly things, such as the heavenly maidens and palaces, for, indeed, such reflections may perhaps stimulate his longing, with the result that he will pursue worldly delights rather than the life to come. Nay, he should reflect, solely, on the delight of gazing exclusively at God's countenance, which has no worldly parallel. [43] Thus, even recollection of sin may arouse desire. The novice, then, might be provoked, and, therefore, forgetfulness, in such a case, is preferable.

You should not be dissuaded from believing this inquiry by what you are told of David's weeping and lamentation.[420] Drawing an analogy between yourself and the prophets is an utter distortion, because they may have descended, by word and deed, to the levels befitting their peoples to whom they were sent to give guidance, and they must, therefore, act in a disguise the sight of which may benefit their people, even if it detracts somewhat from the peak of their station. Some masters, whenever they assigned their disciples any type of spiritual exercise, would join them therein, not because they were in need of it after having accomplished their struggle and soul-training, but in order to facilitate the matter for the disciple. This is why the Prophet said: 'I do not forget but I forget to prescribe,'[a] or, in another version, 'but I neglect to prescribe.' Do not wonder at this. Peoples are under the protective wing of the prophets' compassion, as youth stand under the loving wings of their fathers, and as the cattle are under the care of the herdsmen. Have you not seen how a father, when he wishes to talk to his young child, comes down to the child's level of articulation? Thus the Prophet, God bless him, said to Ḥasan,[421] 'Kakh' Kakh!',[b] when the child took a date, from those assigned to charity, and put it in his mouth. The Prophet did not lack the fluency to say: 'Drop that date for it is forbidden.' Yet when he realized that the child would not understand his locution, he abandoned eloquence and sank to the child's usage. He who teaches an ewe or a bird must make sounds for it, using as a device of instruction chattering or whistling like an animal or bird. Beware lest you neglect such intricacies, the stumbling block of the gnostics, to say nothing of the heedless. We will seek of God, in His tenderness and generosity, good success.

How People differ in the Perseverance of Repentance

Know ye that those who turn unto God in repentance are of four categories.

The first category: the sinner repents and keeps his penitence intact for all his remaining days. He corrects that in which he was remiss, and it does not occur to him to revert to his sins, except for those lapses of habit from which man cannot disengage himself as long as he is not on the level of prophecy. This is integrity of repentance. He who has it goes ahead with good, substituting good deeds for evil. Such repentance is called 'sincere repentance.'[422] The name of this calm soul, which returns to its Lord well-pleased, well-pleasing[423] is the 'serene self'. These are the people referred to in the Prophet's statement: 'The solitary who are totally devoted to the invocation of God, the invocation frees them of their burden so that they appear at Judgement light [of the burden of sins].'[c] Indeed, in this lies an indication that they were oppressed by burdens which the invocation of God removed from them. The people of this class are at [various] levels with respect to their leaning towards appetites: from the penitent, whose desires subsided under the domination of gnosis, upon whom their pressure abated, and who follows the Way undisturbed by fighting them; to the one who incessantly is struggling with the soul but is able to contend with it and deter it.

The differentiation also pertains to the levels of struggle as regards quantity, duration and type. Men differ also as regards the length of lifespan. One is grabbed, dying soon after his repentance, and is gladdened by that for his escape and death before debility. Another is granted time, continues a long strife and endurance, his integrity continuous and his good deeds multiplying. The state of this one is higher and better since every evil is wiped out by a good deed. A scholar said: 'The sin, which the offender committed, is atoned even when it overcomes man ten times as true desire, yet he renounces it, breaking his lust in fear of God.' However, it would be far-fetched to stipulate this, though the great impact of such a rule if imposed is undeniable. However, the weak disciple should not follow this path lest the appetites be aroused, the circumstances brought on for the sin to overcome man, but when he aspires to desist, he may not be able to escape the reins of desire [44] at will. Consequently he will proceed with the sin and he will break his repentance. Rather, the path of repentance is to flee from the outset elements favouring sin, thus barring to man the paths of sin. At the same time, he will seek to conquer his lust as far as possible. Thereby his repentance will be safe from the outset.

The second category is that of the penitent who follows the path of integrity in the major obedient acts and abandons all mortal abominations, yet is not free of sins which grip him unawares and without premeditation. He suffers, however, from them in the course of his affairs, without intention to commit them. But whenever he commits them he censures himself, regrets, is sad, and renews his resolution to be most careful to avoid circumstances which expose him to such acts. This soul is worthy of being the 'reproachful soul'[424] as it rebukes man for the objectionable matters he pursues though with no strong will or calculation or intention.

This is also a high rank albeit inferior to the first class. It is the most frequent state of repentants, as evil is so kneaded into human substance, that rarely is man free from it. Yet, the goal of man's effort is that the good in him should prevail over the evil, so that the balance of good deeds will be heavier and favour his record. But it is extremely rare that the balance of evil deeds would be altogether void. Men of this class hold the good promise from God as He said: THOSE WHO AVOID THE HEINOUS SINS AND INDECENCIES, SAVE LESSER OFFENSES - SURELY THY LORD IS WIDE IN HIS FORGIVENESS.[425] As each lesser offense results in a minor sin, without man being reconciled to it, it is proper that it be among those lesser offenses which are forgiven. God said: AND WHO, WHEN THEY COMMIT AN INDECENCY OR WRONG THEMSELVES, REMEMBER GOD AND PRAY FORGIVENESS FOR THEIR SINS . . . THEIR RECOMPENSE IS FORGIVENESS . . .[426] Because of their regret and self censure, God commends them in spite of their wronging themselves.

To men of this grade refers the Prophet's saying, one related on his authority by 'Alī: 'The best of you are all those who are subject to temptation and are contrite.'[a] Another tradition puts it thus: 'The believer is like a spike of grain, at times he recovers, and at times he is swayed.'[b] Also: 'It is unavoidable that the believer sin, from time to time.'[c] All these passages prove decisively that this measure [of minor infractions] does not invalidate repentance, and does not put the perpetrator in the category of the persistent sinners. To deprive a man of this kind of hope to reach the level of the penitent, is to act like the physician who induces a healthy person to despair of remaining healthy if he partakes of fruit and hot dishes from time to time, though not persistently and continuously; or like the faqīh who induces in the student of fiqh — a despair of ever attaining the degree of a faqīh, all because, at rare and not prolonged intervals, he may be lax in repetition and let

up taking notes. This points out the fault of the physician and the faqīh. On the contrary, a [real] religious scholar is he who does not induce people to despair of attaining the grades of felicity because of temporary failures and the yielding to fleeting seizures of evil. The Prophet said: 'All human beings are sinners, and the best of the sinners are the penitent.'[a] He also said: 'Brittle and patchy is the believer; the best is he who dies on his patch. That means: brittle because of his sins, patchy in repentance and contrition.'[427] God has said: THESE SHALL BE GIVEN THEIR WAGE TWICE OVER FOR THAT THEY PATIENTLY ENDURED, AND AVERT EVIL WITH GOOD.[428] But He has not described them as totally devoid of evil.

The third category is that of one who repents and, for awhile, persists in uprightness. Then, the appetites involve him in some sins, and unable to curb the desire he commits them with intent and premeditation. Yet, along with that, he persists in acts of obedience and avoids some sins despite drive and opportunity [to commit them]. But as this desire or two may overcome him, he wishes only that God enable him to curb it and that He protect him from its evil. Such is his aspiration as he satisfies the desire, but in the end he is contrite and says: Would that I had not done it; I will repent it and strive [45] to subdue it. But, he is tempted and puts off repentance, time after time, day after day. This soul is called, 'the tempted soul.'[429] About such people God said: AND OTHERS HAVE CONFESSED THEIR SINS; THEY HAVE MIXED A RIGHTEOUS DEED WITH ANOTHER EVIL.[430]

On account of his assiduity in obedience and his aversion to the sins he perpetrates, his case is hopeful. Perhaps God will turn unto him. Yet, his end is perilous because of his procrastination and postponement. Perhaps, then, he will be snatched before the repentance, and his case will come under [God's] pleasure. If God, in His generosity, corrects him, cures his defect and grants him repentance, he will join the preceding categories. If, however, his misfortune overcomes and his desire overtakes him, then it may be feared that, in the end, he will deserve, for eternity, what divine speech predestined for him (i.e., hellfire). Whenever it is, for example, impossible for the student to avoid the distractions from learning, this difficulty indicates that he is predestined to be an ignoramus, and hope, in his case, becomes weak. When, on the other hand, diligence facilitates learning, it indicates that he was predestined to be one of the learned. Similarly the relation of the joys and attainments of the hereafter to good and bad deeds, according to divine preordination, is like the relation of sickness and health to the consumption

of food and drugs, and like the relation of the attainment of soul comprehension, by which the high dignities in this world are merited, to the abandonment of indolence and to diligence in soul training. Just as only a soul, which has become understanding through prolonged training, lends itself to the dignities of leadership, judgeship and advancement in knowledge, so only a sound heart, which has become pure through prolonged purification and refinement, is fit to gain the hereafter, and proximity to the Master of the Universe. Thusly has it been preordained by God's direction. That is why God has said: BY THE SOUL, AND THAT WHICH SHAPED IT AND INSPIRED IT TO LEWDNESS AND GOD-FEARING! PROSPEROUS IS HE WHO PURIFIES IT, AND FAILED HAS HE WHO SEDUCES IT.[431] Whenever man falls into sin, the sin becomes a debit, repentance a credit, and this is one of the signs of a setback. The Prophet said: 'A man can, indeed, perform for seventy years, the deeds of the people of Paradise, until others say that he is one of the Paradise-dwellers, and there remains between him and Paradise only a span. Then, what is written overtakes him, and he performs an act of the people of hellfire, and enters hellfire.'[a] Fear of the end, therefore, is prior to repentance. Each breath is an end to that which was prior to it inasmuch as death might be contiguous to it. Let man, then, be attentive to each moment lest he fall into the perilous. Long is regret when it is of no avail.

The fourth category is that of the penitent who proceeds, for a time, in uprightness but then reverts to the temptation of sin or sins without admonishing his soul to repent and without regret for his action. Rather, he becomes absorbed heedlessly in following his appetites. Such a person is among those who persist in sin. Such a soul is the soul which incites to evil and flees from good.[432] Therefore the evil end may be feared, and his affair is in God's pleasure. If he is destined for an evil end, he suffers endless misery; if he is destined for the reward most fair,[433] so that he dies a monotheist, then deliverance from hellfire can be expected for him, at least after some time. Possibly he will be included in the broad pardon because of a hidden inscrutable cause; just as it is not impossible for a man to enter a ruin to find a treasure, and quite accidentally, find it; or to sit at home and be made learned by God without study, as it happened to the prophets. Seeking forgiveness through acts of obedience is like searching for knowledge through effort and repetition, or like seeking wealth through trade and travel. Seeking forgiveness, however, through sheer hope, despite corrupt acts, is like seeking treasures in ruins or knowledge from angelic instruction. If only the one who worked hard could learn! If only the one who traded would gain wealth! If only one who fasted and prayed would be forgiven!

All men are deprived [of ultimate happiness] except those who know. Those who know are all debarred except those who act. Those who act are all precluded except for the righteous, and the righteous are in great peril. Just as one destroyed his house, squandered his wealth, and left himself and his dependents hungry, is considered, by the sensible, as an ignorant and deluded man when he asserts that he anticipates God's generosity in providing for him a treasure to be found under his destroyed home (even though it is not beyond God's power and generosity), so, one who expects pardon [46] from God's generosity, while he is negligent in obedience, persisting in sin, and not treading the path of forgiveness, is considered, by sensible people, as demented. One can only be astonished at the reasoning of this idiot and his propagating his foolishness in a nice form when he says: 'God is generous, His paradise is not too narrow for one like me, nor does my sin injure Him.' Then you see him traveling overseas and hurtling perils[434] in search of dinars. Should he be told: 'Indeed God is generous, the dinars of His treasury do not fall short of your need, and your indolence in abandoning commerce will not harm you; sit, then, in your home and perhaps He will provide for you in an unanticipated manner,' he would consider the speaker stupid and would mock him. He would say: 'What is this nonsense? The heavens do not rain gold and silver. That must be earned. Thus God ordained it, and set His process in motion. God's usage (*sunna*) is immutable.' Fool that he is, he does not grasp that the Master of the hereafter and the Master of this life is one and the same, and that His usage in both worlds does not vary. This was announced when God said: AND THAT A MAN SHALL HAVE TO HIS ACCOUNT ONLY AS HE HAS LABOURED.[435] How, then, can the man believe that God is generous in the hereafter but not so in this life? How can he say that laxity in acquiring wealth is not a requisite of divine generosity while laxity in works for [attaining] abiding possession and eternal felicity is such a requisite, and, further, that God, by virtue of generosity, will give him in the hereafter without [human] effort, but usually will hold back, despite man's effort, in this world? He forgets God's word: AND IN HEAVEN IS YOUR PROVISION, AND THAT YOU ARE PROMISED.[436] God save us from blindness and going astray. This is nothing save standing on one's head and immersion in the darkness of ignorance. To such a man may apply the divine word: AH, IF THOU COULDST SEE THE GUILTY HANGING THEIR HEADS BEFORE

THEIR LORD! 'OUR LORD, WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD; NOW RETURN US, THAT WE MAY DO RIGHTEOUSNESS'.[437] That is, we have seen that Thou wert right when Thou saidst: AND THAT MAN SHALL HAVE TO HIS ACCOUNT ONLY AS HE HAS LABOURED.[438] So turn us back, we shall labour. At that point no alteration is possible and he deserves chastisement. We seek refuge in God from the urges of ignorance and doubt, and of suspicion that leads, of necessity, to an evil fate in the hereafter and resurrection.

What must the Penitent do if he sins either with Intention and Dominant Desire or by Chance

Know, that repentance, contrition and action toward atonement through good deeds to counter the sin, as we have mentioned, are encumbent upon him. If the soul, because of the triumph of desire, does not assist toward the resolution to abstain, then he has failed in one of the two imperatives. he should not, however, abandon the second which is to ward off the evil deed with a good one so as to obliterate the former, that he may be of those who blend a righteous deed with an evil one. The good deeds which atone evil, are through the heart, the tongue or the limbs. Let the good deed stand in the stead of the evil with its ramifications.

In his heart let him atone by entreating God for pardon and forgiveness, and by humbling himself with the self-abasement, of the fugitive slave. His humiliation should be manifest to others in reducing his rank among them. The sinful fugitive has nothing to be proud of among other people. Likewise, he should harbour in his heart benevolence toward Muslims, and the resolve to perform the acts of obedience.

His tongue should confess the offense and ask for forgiveness by saying: 'My Lord, I have stained my soul and have done evil, forgive my sins.' Thus he should multiply the kinds of apology that we have cited in the Book on Invocations and Supplications.[439]

The limbs should be engaged in acts of obedience, charity and various acts of worship. Some sayings of the Companions indicated that pardon of sin may be expected if the sin is followed by eight acts. Four are acts of the heart: repentance or resolution to repent, wish to desist from sin, fear of sin's punishment, and desire of forgiveness. Four are acts of the limbs: that following sin you should pray two rak'as,[440] then seek God's forgiveness after them[441] saying seventy times: 'Praised by Almighty God,' praising Him even a hundred times; then you give alms, then fast [47] for a day. A saying of the Companions: 'You shall perform the ritual ablution, enter the mosque and pray two rak'as.'[a] A tradition: 'You shall pray four rak'as.'[b] Another tradition: 'When you have done an evil, follow it with an atoning good deed. A secret [act] should be followed by [another] secret act and a public act by [another] public act.'[c] It is, therefore, said that charity given in secret atones the sins of the night, and charity given openly atones the sins of the day.

It is related in a sound tradition that a man said to the Apostle of God: 'I have taken up with a woman and I have done, with her, all save intercourse. Pronounce upon me the judgement of God.' The Prophet said: 'Did you not pray with us the early morning prayer?' 'Yes,' replied the man. The Prophet then said: 'Indeed, good deeds cancel the evil ones.'[d] This indicates that contact with women, save fornication, is a minor sin, inasmuch as prayer figures as an atonement, in accordance with the Prophet's statement: 'The five prayers are an atonement for all that happens between them except for the mortal sins.' In all conditions, then, man should every day take himself to account, sum up his evil acts, and strive to cancel them out with good deeds.

You might say:

How can the search for pardon be beneficial without untying the knot of persistence? In the tradition it is related: 'One who seeks pardon from sin, while persisting in it, is as one who mocks the verses of the Koran.'[e442] One used to say: "I seek God's pardon for my saying, 'I seek God's pardon.'" It has been said: Seeking pardon with the tongue is the repentance of liars. Rābi'a al-'Adawīya[443] said: 'Our search for pardon needs much apology.'

Know, then, that innumerable traditions have been handed down on the merit of seeking pardon — we have mentioned them in the Book of Invocations and Supplications[444] — to the point that God connected the quest for pardon with the life of the Apostle. God said: BUT GOD WOULD NEVER CHASTISE THEM, WITH THEE AMONG THEM; GOD WOULD NEVER CHASTISE THEM AS THEY BEGGED FORGIVENESS.[445] One of the Companions used to say: 'We have two assurances of clemency. One of them, the Prophet's being among us, is gone, and only the quest for pardon remains. Were that to disappear, we would perish.'[f] We say, then, that the seeking of pardon which is the repentance of liars, is that which pertains merely to the tongue, with the heart having no share, like the utterance of a man who, by habit and with utmost neglect, says: 'I seek God's forgiveness', or when he hears the description of hellfire, says: 'We seek refuge in God from it', without his heart being affected. This refers to the mere movement of the tongue,

and is of no avail. Yet, if the heart implores God and prayer to Him is added in the request of pardon, with sincere will, pure intent and desire, then it is, in itself, a pious deed, and may succeed in cancelling out the evil deed. Such is borne out by the traditions handed down on the merit of seeking pardon. The Prophet even said: 'One who seeks pardon does not persist [in sin], even if he reverted [to sin] seventy times during a day.'[a] [48] This is tantamount to seeking pardon with the heart.

Repentance and the search for pardon have various stages. Even their beginnings are not devoid of gain though the initial gain falls short of the final gain. Sahl,[446] therefore said: 'Never can man do without his Lord. The best man can do is return to Him in every matter. If a man transgresses he should say: "O Lord! Forgive me." When man is through with his sin, he should say: "O Lord! Grant me immunity from sin." If man acts in penitence, let him say: "Lord! Accept it from me." ' Sahl was also asked about the search for pardon which atones sins. He said: 'The beginning of the quest for pardon is compliance (*istijāba*), then conversion (*ināba*), and then [full] repentance. Compliance consists of acts of the limbs, conversion — of acts of the heart, and repentance is man's approach to his Master promising to renounce his evil nature. Then he seeks God's pardon for his actual failings, his ignorance of divine grace and his ingratitude. At that point he will be forgiven and he will attain refuge with God, [followed, in order, by] a shift to solitude, stability, elucidation, contemplation, gnosis, confidential discourse, purity, friendship, and then, secret discourse which is intimacy.[447] This does not establish itself in a man's heart until knowledge is his nourishment, invocation (*dhikr)* his sustenance, contentment his provision and trust in God (*tawwakul*) his companion. Then God will gaze upon him, raise him unto the throne. His station, then, will be that of the throne bearers.'

Sahl was also asked about the Prophet's statement: 'The penitent is God's beloved.' He said: 'He is beloved when he possesses all that is mentioned in the verse [which begins]:[448] THOSE WHO REPENT, THOSE WHO SERVE . . . .'[449] Further, he said: 'The beloved is he who does not engage in that which his beloved abhors.'

The point is that repentance has two effects. The first is the atonement of evil so that man becomes as one who has never sinned. The second is the attainment of various grades so that he becomes a friend. Atonement, also, is of [various] stages. It may be a total obliteration of the sin, or a reduction thereof. The difference depends on the different grades of repentance. The quest for pardon through the heart, and

correction by good deeds, even if man is not yet free from persistence in sin, is of the initial stage and is not without some benefit. You must not, therefore, think it is irrelevant whether it is present or absent. For men of vision and men of heart know beyond doubt, that the divine word: AND WHOSO HAS DONE AN ATOM'S WEIGHT OF GOOD SHALL SEE IT,[450] is true and that, just as a grain cast upon the balance is not without effect, so, also, a grain's weight of good is not without effect. If the first grain had no consequence, surely the second would be like it, and the balance would not be upset by the load of them. That is, evidently, impossible. But the balance of good deeds is given preponderance by the atoms of good until it carries weight and lifts away the balance of impious deeds. Beware, lest you belittle the smallest measure of transgression, without disavowing it. You will be[451] like the stupid woman who neglects her spinning excusing herself by the fact that she is unable to produce more than one thread per hour. She said: 'What is the good of one thread? What impact does it have upon a garment?' Fool that she is, she does not comprehend that a worldly garment is achieved thread by thread, and that worldly bodies, despite the expansion of the world's areas, are collections of individual atoms. Supplication and apology with the heart, therefore, are a good deed that does not at all get lost before God.

I say, moreover, that seeking pardon [only] with the tongue is also a good deed inasmuch as such movement of the tongue, even heedlessly, is better than wagging of the tongue, at the same time, in slander against a fellow Muslim or chatter. Nay, it is better than to remain silent [without uttering the quest for pardon]. Its merit is manifest in comparison to silence while, on the other hand, it is a shortcoming by comparison to the action of the heart. That is why one disciple said to his master, Abū 'Uthmān al-Maghribī:[452] 'My tongue, at times, flows with the invocation of God and the recitation of the Koran, yet my heart is heedless.' The master said: 'Thank God, since He engaged one of your limbs in the good cause, accustomed it to invocation, and did not use it in evil nor accustom it to wasteful chatter.' What he mentioned is true. If the limbs become conditioned to good, to the point that this becomes part of their nature, this will repel many a sin. If one who accustomed his tongue to seeking pardon hears another person lie, his tongue reverts spontaneously to its conditioning and utters: 'I ask God's forgiveness!' If one has been conditioned to chatter, his tongue proceeds to say: 'How stupid you are!, or, how ugly is your lie!' If he who has been conditioned to utter 'I take refuge with God' happens to be present at the very

beginning of an evildoer's evil, he says, by reflex: 'We seek refuge in God.' But if the tongue is conditioned to chatter, he says: 'God curse him!' Man then sins in one of [these] two types of speech, and is safe with the other. His safety is a consequence of the good habituation of his tongue. Such is one of the meanings of the divine word: GOD LEAVES NOT TO WASTE THE WAGE OF THE GOOD-DOERS;[453] and of the passage: AND IF IT BE A GOOD DEED HE WILL DOUBLE IT, AND GIVE FROM HIMSELF [46] A MIGHTY WAGE.[454] Contemplate how it is doubled when he makes the heedless search for forgiveness a habit of the tongue until, with that habit, he repels the evil of disobedience involved in slander, malediction and officiousness. This is the doubling, in this world, of minor acts of obedience; the doubling in the hereafter is GREATER, DID THEY BUT KNOW.[455]

Beware lest you discern, in acts of obedience, only hardships, with the result that your longing for worship wanes. Indeed, this is an intrigue spread out, in his accursedness, by Satan for the deluded. He made them believe that they are insightful and understanding about hidden things and mysteries. [They say:] 'So what is the good of our invocation with the tongue while the heart is heedless?' By this ruse people are divided into three kinds: one who wrongs himself; one who adopts a middle course; and one who proceeds in doing good.

As for the last, he says: 'You are right, O cursed one, but it is a right saying with which you seek a wrong intent. Certainly, then, I should doubly chastise you. I shall defy you in two respects, by adding the movement of the heart to that of the tongue.' He is like one who treats Satan's wound by sprinkling salt on it.

As for the deluded wrongdoer, he feels, in himself, the conceit of sagacity for this minor point. Then, he is incapable of sincerity in the heart, abandoning at the same time the habituation of the tongue in invoking God. He, then, assists Satan, is hung by the rope of his own delusion, so that there is complete collaboration and harmony between the two. This is as it is said: 'The water skin fits its [skin] cover, it fits it and adjusts to it.'

As for the one who follows a middle course, he is unable to defy Satan by associating the heart in [his] practice but understands the deficiency of the movement of the tongue as compared with that of the heart. Yet, in comparison to silence and chatter, he follows the right course persistently, and asks God to involve the heart, with the tongue, in habituation of the good.

The one who proceeds [with spontaneous good] is like the weaver

whose weaving was faulted, so he abandoned it, and became a scribe. The failing wrongdoer is like the one who abandoned weaving totally and became a street cleaner. The one treading the middle course is like a man who fails to become a scribe but says: 'I do not deny that weaving is objectionable.[456] Yet, the weaver can be faulted [only] when compared to the scribe and not when compared to the street cleaner. If I am incapable of being a scribe, I will not abandon the weaving.'

That is why Rābi'a al-'Adawīya said: 'Our quest for pardon needs much apology.' Do not think that she faults the movement of the tongue as invocation of God. Rather, she faults the heedlessness of the heart. Man must apologize for the negligence of the heart, not for the action of his tongue. If he also refrained from seeking pardon verbally, he needs two entreaties to pardon, not one. That is how you should understand the fault of what is faulted and the praise of what is praised. Else you will remain ignorant of the meaning of the saying of the righteous: 'The good deeds of the pious are the misdeeds of the Near-Stationed.'[457]

These matters are established relatively, and should not be taken absolutely. Nay, the smallest measures of obedience or rebellion should not be held in disdain. That is why Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq[458] said: 'God has concealed three in three. [He concealed] His pleasure with an act of obedience, so that you should not disdain any such act, as perhaps precisely that one pleases Him. He concealed His anger with an act of transgression; so do not belittle any such act, as perhaps precisely this one arouses His wrath. He concealed who is His saint among His worshipers. Do not, then, disdain any one of them, for perhaps it is he who is God's saint.' He added, 'and he hid His response to prayer; do not, then, stop praying; perhaps the divine response will follow it.'

THE FOURTH PILLAR: ON THE REMEDY OF REPENTANCE AND THE WAY OF TREATMENT FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE KNOT OF PERSISTENCE[459]

Know that men are of two types. Firstly, there is the 'young man who has no sensual desire', having grown up in [the pursuit of] good and the avoidance of evil. He is the one about whom the Prophet said: 'Your Lord is delighted by a youth who has no sensual desire.'[a] This, however, is extremely rare. Secondly, there is the man who is not without sin. Further, this second group is divided into the persistent and the penitent. It is our aim to explain how the knot of persistence is to be treated, and to indicate the remedy therefor.

Know, then, that the cure which is repentance is attained only by the remedy. One cannot, however, prescribe the remedy without diagnosing the malady, for remedy means to counteract the causes of the malady. For every disease results from a cause, and the remedy for it consists of dissolving the cause, removing it and cancelling it. A thing is cancelled only by its opposite. The cause of persistence is only heedlessness and appetite. Heedlessness is only opposed by knowledge and appetite — by forbearance in eliminating [50] the factors leading to appetite. Heedlessness is the beginning of error. God has said: AND THOSE — THEY ARE THE HEEDLESS ONES; WITHOUT A DOUBT, IN THE WORLD TO COME THEY WILL BE THE LOSERS.[460] There is, therefore, no medication [conducive] to repentance except a compound[461] of the sweetness of knowledge and the bitterness of endurance. Just as oxymel combines the sweetness of sugar and the acidity of vinegar, aiming, with each, at a different end in their combined impact, in order that the causes that provoke the bile be curbed, so you must understand the treatment of the heart against the measure of the malady of persistence present in it. Now, this remedy has two roots: 1) knowledge and 2) endurance. These must be explained.

You might ask:

Does every knowledge avail in breaking down persistence or is some specific knowledge necessary?

Know, then, that all kinds of knowledge are remedies for the heart's maladies. Yet, for each malady there is a specific knowledge. Just as the science of medicine is effective in the treatment of disease in general, yet each malady requires specific [specialized] knowledge, so also [is the case of] the treatment of persistence. Let us, then, discuss the specificity of that knowledge by comparison with the diseases of the body so that it be more readily understandable. We say, therefore, that the patient must believe certain propositions.

Firstly, he must believe, in general, that sickness and health have causes which he arrives at by the [exercise of] selection in accord with what God has determined. This belief is at the very root of medicine. For, one who has no faith in it will not engage in therapy, and is sure to perish. What corresponds to this, in our context, is the belief in the root of revelation, namely, that felicity in the hereafter has a cause, obedience, while wretchedness [also] has a cause, transgression. This is the faith in the root of the revelations. This must be secured either by inquiry or conformism — both varieties of faith.

Secondly, the patient must trust a certain physician, i.e., that he is learned in medicine, skilled, and trustworthy in his judgement, not deceiving or lying. Faith on the basis of medicine will not avail the patient, in itself, without this belief. In our context, the corresponding element is the knowledge of the Apostle's veracity, and the belief that all of what he said is true and right, with no falsehood or discrepancy.

Thirdly, the patient must heed the doctor's warning as regards the consumption of fruit and harmful substances in general, so that the fear of deficient protection overcomes him. The intensity of the fear, then, will motivate him to seek protection. In religion the corresponding element is — a) attentiveness to the Koran verses and the traditions which include the call to piety and warning against the commission of sins and the pursuit of cravings, and b) the belief in everything he hears on the subject, without doubt or distrust, so that the fear is aroused in him which reinforces for endurance, that other pillar of treatment.

Fourthly, he must listen to the physician concerning the malady and what to beware of, so that [the physician] might inform him in detail, in the first instance, which of his actions, conditions, food and drinks, may harm him. Not every patient need avoid everything, nor will just any medication avail him. Rather, for each specific malady there is specific information and specific treatment. The corresponding element in religion is that not every person suffers from every craving or sin. Rather, every believer [has a propensity towards] a certain sin or certain sins. But then, his is an immediate and pressing need to recognize that these are sins, that they are injurious, what is the measure of their harm, how to arrive at desisting from them, and, finally, how to atone for such of them as have occurred.

Such knowledge is dealt with by the doctors of religion, the 'ulamā', who are the heirs of the prophets. The sinner, then, if he is aware of his transgression, must seek treatment from the doctor, that is, from the 'ālim. If the sinner does not know that what he is doing is a sin, the 'ālim should inform him thereof. Each 'ālim should be responsible for his area, town, quarter, mosque or shrine. He should instruct his folk in their religion, and distinguish that which may harm them from that which may benefit them, that which will make them miserable from that which will make them happy. The 'ālim must not wait to be asked about this. Rather, he must devote himself to rallying the people, as the 'ulamā' are the heirs of the prophets. The prophets did not abandon the people to their ignorance but, instead, the prophets called upon the people in their assemblies and, originally would go from door to door, seeking the people one by one in order to give them guidance. The sick of heart

are not aware of their illness, just as he, upon whose face leprosy has broken out [51] and who has no mirror, does not know of his leprosy as long as another person does not inform him thereof. Such is the personal duty of all the 'ulamā'.

All rulers must appoint, in each village and quarter, a devout jurisprudent to instruct the people in their religion. People are born ignorant and bringing the call [of Islam] to them, in both root and branch, is imperative. This world is the abode of the ill inasmuch as only the dead are in the bowels of the earth and only the sick on its face. The ailing in heart are more numerous than the ailing of body. The 'ulamā' are the physicians, and the rulers are the custodians of the abode of the ill. Just as the physician surrenders the patient who does not take care of himself or who has been overcome by insanity to a custodian, to confine the patient in fetters, forestalling his damaging himself or others, so every patient that does not respond to the 'ālim's treatment is surrendered to the ruler, in order that the ruler restrict possible evil to and from the ailing.

The sickness of the hearts became more widespread than that of the body for three reasons. Firstly, the one who suffers from such is not aware of his being ill. Secondly, its consequence is not visible in this world. This differs from the disease of the body whose end is death [which is] visible and which people naturally shun, while what follows death is not visible. The consequence of sins is the death of the heart, which is not witnessed in this world. The shunning of sins, therefore, is rare, even though the perpetrator is aware of them. For this reason you will see him, in case of the disease of the heart, relying on God's generosity while striving diligently in the treatment of bodily ailment without reliance on God.[462] Thirdly, and this is the calamitous affliction, there is the loss of the physician. For, it is the 'ulamā' who are the physicians, yet in these times they have been stricken by a sore affliction, the treatment of which is beyond their capabilities. They have found solace in the wide spread of the disease, so that their deficiency is not apparent. They have been forced to mislead the people instructing them in a manner bound to compound their illness. For the destructive affliction is the love for this world. This disease has overcome the doctors. They are, therefore, incapable of cautioning the people against it, for they fear they would be told: 'How do you prescribe treatment [to others], while forgetting yourselves?' For this reason the affliction spread throughout the people, the plague grew, remedy has run out, and, because of the loss of the physicians, the people have perished. Nay, the physicians have

engaged in various kinds of misleading. Would that they did not cure, at least they would not aggravate the malady. Would they only remain silent, for when they speak, they care in their sermons only about what may please the masses or win their hearts. They succeed in that only through demoting fear and promoting hope, and speaking of the signs of [divine] mercy, because that is more pleasant to the ear and easier on the tempers. The people, then, leave the exhortatory sessions further emboldened to sin and with greater trust in divine generosity.

Whenever the physician is ignorant or perfidious[463] he destroys with the remedy as he applies it in the wrong place. Hope and fear are two remedies, but for two persons of opposing symptoms. One who was overcome with fear, to the point that he completely renounced the world and charged himself beyond endurance, made his life totally miserable, the severity of his intemperance in fear is broken by talking about the reasons for hope, so that he might return to a proper balance. Likewise, one who persists in sin, yet though desirous of repentance, is held back because of despondency and despair, thinking his previous sins too great, is also treated by the reasons for hope, so that he may aspire to the acceptance of repentance, and finally repent.

On the other hand, treating the deluded, who is devoted to sin, by speaking of the reasons of hope, resembles treating with honey the patient who developed a higher fever. That is the practice of the ignorant and the fools. It is the corruption of the physicians, therefore, that is the real problem,[464] totally beyond cure.

You might say:

Speak of the way which the preacher should follow in admonishing the people.

Know, that this is an involved and protracted matter. Yet certainly, we will indicate the types beneficial in breaking down persistence in sin, and inducing people to renounce sin. These are of four types.

The first is that men should mention those verses of the Koran which strike fear in sinners and rebels, as also [similar passages] from the traditions going back to the Prophet and sayings of the Companions [52]. Such, for example, as this statement of the Prophet: 'Dawn does not rise on any day nor does twilight disappear any night but that two angels echo in four voices. One says: "Would only that these creatures had not been created." The other ways: "Since they were created would they know what they were created for." The first says: "Would that, since they learned not[465] why they were created, they acted as they were taught."[a] (In some versions: "Would that they sit together and

discuss[466] what they learned.'') Finally, the last voice says: ''Since they do not act as they were taught, would that they repent their deeds.'' '

One of the old masters said: 'When a man sins the Master of the Right orders the Master of the Left, who is in charge of that man, to hold back the pen [about the man] for six hours. If the man repents and seeks forgiveness, the sin is not recorded against him. If, however, he does not seek forgiveness, it is recorded.'

Another of the old masters said: 'Whenever a man transgresses, his place upon earth seeks permission to swallow him, and his roof seeks leave, from the heavens, to fall onto him in fragments.[467] But God says to the heaven and earth: ''Desist from my servant and grant him respite. You did not create him, and if you did you would be compassionate towards him; perhaps he will turn to Me and I will forgive him; perhaps he will change to righteousness, and I will change his sin for him into pious deeds.'' That is the meaning of the verse: GOD HOLDS THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, LEST THEY REMOVE: DID THEY REMOVE, NONE WOULD HOLD THEM AFTER HIM.'[468]

The tradition of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb:[469] 'The seal is attached to the foot of the Throne. When the sacred is violated, and the forbidden permitted, God sends the seal and it is impressed upon the hearts and their contents.'[b] In the tradition of Mujāhid:[470] 'The heart is like the open palm. Whenever man sins, a finger contracts until all the fingers contract and the heart is obstructed. That is the sealing.'[c] Hasan[471] said: 'Between man and God stands a certain boundary of sin. When man reaches it, God seals his heart, and afterward no longer promotes him towards good fate.'

The traditions of the Prophet and the sayings of the Companions on the censure of transgression and the praise of the penitent are innumerable. The preacher should draw from them constantly if he is the heart to God's Apostle. The Prophet bequeathed no dinars or dirhams but knowledge and wisdom which the scholar inherits according to the measure of his attainment.

The second type is the stories of the prophets and the righteous forebears and what misfortunes befell them because of their sins. Such have a strong impact, and are of manifest benefit to the hearts of men. For example, the story of Adam in his rebellion and banishment from Paradise. It is related that when he ate of the tree, the garments vanished from his body and he was left naked. The crown and the diadem were so embarrassed that they sought to disappear from him. Gabriel then came to him, took the crown from his head and loosened the diadem

from his forehead. It was announced from above the throne: 'Descend [O Adam and Eve] from My Presence! One who has transgressed against Me cannot be close to Me!' Adam turned to Eve weeping, and said: 'This is the first misfortune of the transgression, we have been removed from the presence of the Beloved.'[472]

It is related that when Solomon was punished for his error, because of the idol which was worshipped in his home [for] forty days, — (It is said: because a woman asked him to give judgement in favour of her father and he said yes but did not do so; or, that because of his attitude toward her he wished in his heart that [53] the judgement be for her father against his opponent.) — his kingdom was taken away for forty days. He fled, forlorn. He would beg, with palm out, but would not be fed. If he said: 'Feed me, for I am Solomon, son of David', he was taken up, driven off and beaten. It is told that he asked for food from a woman's household.[473] She, however, chased him away and spat in his face. Another version says: An old woman brought out a jar containing urine and emptied it on his head. [All this happened] until, after the end of the fortieth day of chastisement, God dislodged the seal ring from the belly of the whale, and Solomon put it on.[474] The birds then came and perched on his head. The jinn, devils and beasts also came and assembled round him. Some of those who had offended him apologized. Solomon said: 'I do not blame you for what you have done before, nor do I praise you for your excuse now. Indeed, this affair was [ordained] in the heavens and was inevitable.[475]

It is related in the Isrā'īliyāt that a man married a woman from another town, then sent his servant to bring her to him. She sought to tempt and seduce him. He, however, fought her and resisted the temptation. God made him a prophet for the blessing of his piety, and he became a prophet among the children of Israel. In the stories of Moses [it is reported] that he said to al-Khaḍir:[476] 'For what deed has God revealed to you knowledge of the Hidden?' It is related that the wind was carrying Solomon, and he glanced at his gown, and it was new. He seemed to like it. The wind put him down. He said [to the wind]: 'Why did you do this though I did not order you?' It said: 'But we obey you only when you obey God.'[477]

It is also related that God communicated to Jacob: 'Do you know why I have separated you from your child Joseph?' I FEAR THE WOLF MAY EAT HIM, WHILE YOU ARE HEEDLESS OF HIM.[478] Why did you fear the wolf and not appeal to Me? Why did you consider his brothers' heedlessness, and not consider My guarding him? Do you know

why I returned him to you?' Jacob replied: 'No!' God said: 'Because you appealed to Me and said: HAPLY GOD WILL BRING THEM ALL TO ME.[479] And because you also said: DEPART, MY SONS, AND SEARCH OUT TIDINGS OF JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHER. DO NOT DESPAIR [OF GOD'S COMFORT].'[480] Thus, also, when Joseph said to the king's attendant: 'MENTION ME IN THY LORD'S PRESENCE,'[481] God said: SATAN CAUSED HIM TO FORGET TO MENTION HIM TO HIS MASTER, SO THAT HE CONTINUED IN THE PRISON FOR CERTAIN YEARS.[482]

Such stories are innumerable. The Koran and traditions have not adduced these just for evening entertainment. Rather, their object is contemplation and pondering so that you may learn that even the prophets are not forgiven their minor sins. How, then, can others be forgiven major sins? Certainly, they were fortunate[483] that they were swiftly overcome with punishment in this world, so that it was not put off to the hereafter. The wretched, however, are those given time to increase their misdeeds, for the chastisement of the hereafter is graver and greater. These kinds of stories should also be told, frequently, to those persisting in sin; for it is effective in stimulating the urge for repentance.

The third type is that the preacher should make them realize that one may expect that chastisement for sins is to be expedited in this world, and that the afflictions of man come as a result of his offenses. Many a man, however, is indulgent in the matter of the hereafter, and, because of his ignorance, fears more God's punishment in this world. It is necessary, therefore, to frighten him therewith. In most cases, the chastisement for all the sins [of a person] is expedited in this world, as is related in the story of David and Solomon. Because of his sins a man may become poor, his rank among people may decline, and he may fall into the hands of his enemies. The Prophet said: 'Indeed, a man is deprived of sustenance on account of a sin he commits.'[a] Ibn Mas'ūd[484] said: 'I reckon that a man forgets knowledge through a sin he commits, and this is the meaning of the Prophet's word: 'One who perpetrated (*qārafa*) a sin, intelligence withdraws from him (*fāraqahu*), never to return.'[b] An old master said: 'The curse is not the black face or loss of wealth; nay, the curse is that you disengage yourself from a sin only to fall into another which is like it or worse.' It is as he said, for the curse is expulsion and alienation. Unless he is assisted toward the good, evil comes easily to him, and he is removed [from the divine grace]. To be without divine assistance toward success [in acting righteously] is the greatest deprivation. Each sin invites another and it is compounded. Man is then deprived

thereby of the beneficial nourishment of social intercourse with the [54] 'ulamā' who rebuke sin, and with the righteous; nay, he is detested by God so that the righteous may detest him.

It is related about one of the gnostics that he was walking in mud, holding his clothes, wary of his foot slipping, but he slipped and fell. He got up and was walking in the middle of the mire, crying and saying: 'This is the image of man. Continuously he is wary of sins and avoids them until he tumbles into one and, then, two, after which he plunges into sinning.' This is an allusion that the punishment of sin is expedited by the drift into another sin. That is why Fuḍayl[485] said: 'That which you have blamed on the vicissitude of time and the brutishness of brethren, is the result of your sins.' Somebody said: 'I certainly recognize the punishment for my sin in the ill nature of my ass.' Another said: 'I recognize the punishment even in a mouse in my house.' One of the Syrian sufis said: 'I noticed a Christian lad of handsome countenance. I stopped and stared at him. Then, Ibn al-Jalā' ad-Dimashqī[486] passed me. He seized hold of my hand, and I felt embarrassed before him. I said: "O Abū 'Abdallāh! By Almighty God, I was amazed by this beautiful form and this masterful piece of workmanship and [by] how it was created for hellfire!" He squeezed my hand and said: "You shall encounter the punishment [for this staring] after awhile." ' The Syrian said: 'I was punished for it thirty years later.' Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī said: 'Sexual maturation is a punishment,' and 'no one misses the communal prayer except through the commission of sin.' In a tradition [it is said]: 'What you blame on your time is really due to your deeds which are corrupt.'[a] A tradition: "God says: 'The least that I shall do to a man, if he prefers his craving to obedience to Me, is that I shall deprive him of the delight of My discourse.'"[b]

It is told of Abū 'Amr b. 'Alwān, in a story that would take too long, that he said: 'One day, as I was standing in prayer, my heart was seized by desire. It continued in my mind until a craving of men was born from it. I fell to the ground, and my entire body turned black. I hid myself at home, and did not emerge for three days. I was purging my body with soap, in the bath. The blackness, however, was only compounded, until, after three nights, it was undone. I then encountered al-Junayd[487] who had sent for me, summoning me from ar-Raqqa. When I came to him he said to me: "Were you not ashamed before God? I stood before Him but then your soul concealed a craving until it tenderly[488] overpowered you and removed you from before God. Had I not prayed to God for you and turned to Him in repentance on your behalf, surely

you would have met God with that colour." I wondered how he knew of that, for he was in Baghdad while I was in ar-Raqqa.'

Know, that whenever man sins be blackens the face of his heart. If he is happy, the blackness becomes apparent upon his exterior so as to rebuke him. If he is wretched, it is concealed from him, until be becomes engrossed in sin and liable to hellfire. There are numerous traditions concerning the injurious [consequences] of sin in this world, such as poverty, sickness, et cetera. But the calamity of sin, in this world, in general, is that man acquires following it another sin. If he is tempted by a thing, it becomes a punishment, and he is deprived of sustenance to compound his wretchedness. Even if bounty comes his way to win him over, he is denied the feeling of gratitude, so that he is punished for his ingratitude. But in the case of the obedient, it is part of the blessing of his obedience that any bounty, for him, is a reward for his obedience and he is divinely assisted toward gratitude for it; while each tribulation becomes an atonement for his sins, and adds, thereby, to his stature.

The fourth type is [for the preacher] to talk of the punishments that befell individual sins such as wine imbibing, fornication, theft, murder, slander, arrogance and envy. These sins are innumerable. To talk of them to the wrong people, is like applying the remedy to the wrong spot. The 'ālim should be like the skilled physician, diagnosing first, by the pulse, the external appearance and the reflexes, the internal maladies and, then, engaging in their treatment. By concatenation of circumstances he infers the hidden qualities. In facing what he has learned let him emulate God's Apostle. When someone said to the Prophet: 'O Apostle of God, counsel me but do not overburden me!', the Prophet said: 'Do not be angry.'[a] Another man asked the Prophet: 'O Apostle of God, counsel me.' The Prophet said: [55] 'You must renounce [the aspiration] for other people's wealth. Indeed, such is [true] wealth. Beware of greed, it is the everpresent poverty. Pray a final prayer.[489] Beware of what one has to apologize for.'[b] A man said to Muḥammad b. Wāsi':[490] 'Counsel me!' He said: 'I advise you to be an angel in this world and the next!' The man asked: 'How do I [achieve] that?' He said: 'Practice asceticism.'[491]

It seems that the Prophet discerned, in the first questioner, the signs of anger, and restrained him therefrom. In the second questioner he discerned the signs of greed and perseverance in this expectation of the wealth of others. Muḥammad b. Wāsi' discerned in his petitioner, the signs of preoccupation with this world.

A man said to Mu'āḍ:[492] 'Counsel me!' He said: 'Be merciful, and I will guarantee you Paradise.'[493] Apparently he detected in the man traces of coarseness and harshness.

A man said to Ibrāhīm b. 'Adham:[494] 'Counsel me!' He said: 'Be careful about people! You need people, and must be with others. Men are human. But not all men are human. Gone are the human beings (*nās*) what remains is the monkey (*nisnās*). I do not consider them as people, nay, they have plunged into the water of despair (*ya's*).' It seems, then, as if Ibn Adham discerned in him the damage of [excessive] association, and pointed to what was prevailing in his situation, at the time. That was his injury [of or by] others. It is more proper that a statement should fit the state of the questioner, rather than that of the speaker.

Mu'āwiya[495] wrote to 'Ā'isha: 'Write me a letter, giving me therein counsel but make it brief.' She wrote to him: 'From 'Ā'isha to Mu'āwiya, peace be upon you! I heard the Apostle of God say: "One who seeks God's pleasure through men's displeasure, God protects him from the trouble of men, and one who seeks God's displeasure through men's pleasure, God puts him in charge of men."[a] Farewell!' Consider her cleverness in how she ventured upon the bane that confronts rulers, namely, the control over men versus the desire to please them. She wrote him on another occasion: 'Fear God! If you fear God, He will protect you from men. If, however, you fear men, they will not avail you against God. Farewell!'

Therefore, it should be the concern of every counselor to detect the hidden qualities and discern the appropriate conditions, so that he might deal with the significant. To narrate all the spiritual exhortations in the individual cases is impossible, and, to engage in preaching on what does not call for preaching is a waste of time.

You might say:

If the preacher is speaking to an assembly, or is asked for counsel by someone with whose inner state he is unfamiliar, how is he to act?

The path for him, in such a case, is to preach that which is of universal application, generally or mostly. For in the religious studies there are nutriments and remedies. The nutriments are for all, and the remedies are for the sick.

A case in point is what is related of a man who said to Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī:[496] 'Counsel me!' He replied: 'You must fear God, it is the beginning of all good. You must exert yourself in *jihād*,[497] it is the monasticism of Islam. You must read the Koran, it is an illumination for you among the earthly host and a remembrance for you among the

heavenly host. You must be silent, except for the good. Thus you will triumph over Satan.'

Also, a man said to Ḥasan:[498] 'Counsel me!' He said: 'Honour God's command and He will honour you.'

Luqmān[499] said to his son: 'My son, join the throng around the scholars, but do not dispute with them lest they hate you. Take from this world your subsistence, and spend the rest of your acquisitions for your hereafter. Do not reject this world totally lest you be a burden to and dependent upon others. Fast, so as to curb your craving but not so as to damage your prayer. For prayer is superior to fasting. Do not keep the company of the foolish, and do not associate with the two-faced.' He also said: 'My son, do not laugh without amazement; do not proceed without aim; do not ask of what is of no concern to you; do not squander your wealth to promote the property of another. For your stock is that which you prepared [of good deeds] ahead of time, and the stock of others is that which you leave [to others]. My son, one who is compassionate is treated with compassion; one who is silent is safe; he whose word is good gains, he whose word is evil sins, and he who does not master his tongue regrets.'

A man said to Abū Ḥāzim:[500] 'Counsel me!' He said: 'Adhere to that which you would consider precious when facing death; [56] avoid that which you would consider a misfortune when facing death.'

Moses said to al-Khaḍir: 'Counsel me!' Al-Khaḍir said: 'Be benign and be not angry; be useful, not harmful; eschew obstinacy; go not without need; and do not laugh without wonderment. O son of 'Imrān,[501] do not scold sinners for their errors, cry over your own.'

A man said to Muḥammad b. Karrām:[502] 'Counsel me!' Ibn Karrām said: 'Strive to please thy Creator in the same measure as you seek your own satisfaction.'

A man said to Ḥāmid al-Lafāf: 'Counsel me!' He said: 'Make for your religion a cover like the cover on the Koran, lest[503] it should get soiled by troubles.' The man asked: 'What is the cover of religion?' He said: 'Renouncing worldly pursuit except for the minimum; abstention from talking much unless it is necessary; reducing social intercourse to a minimum.'

Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] wrote to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz[504] saying: 'Fear that which God has alarmed you about, be cautious of that which God has cautioned you about, and take from what is in your hands (*fī yadayka*) to what is ahead of you (*bayna yadayka*). At the time of death the ultimate message shall reach you. Farewell!'

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz wrote to Ḥasan asking for his admonition. Hasan replied: 'The greatest terror and the horrors are ahead of you, and you cannot escape from witnessing them, be it in salvation or perdition. Know, that he who takes his soul to account gains, and he who is negligent of his soul loses. He who contemplates the consequences is saved, but he who follows his mood errs. He who is meek gains; he who fears is safe; he who is safe learns by example; he who learns by example gains insight; he who has insight understands, and he who understands knows. If you have slipped, return. If you have regret, uproot [the evil]. If you are ignorant, ask. And, if you are angered, forbear.'

Miṭraf b. 'Abdullāh[505] wrote to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Azīz: 'This world is an abode of punishment. For it the senseless are gathering [goods] and, by it one who has no knowledge is deluded. O Commander of the Faithful! Be in it like one whose injury is treated, enduring the severity of the remedy for fear of the consequences of the disease.'

'Umar also wrote to 'Adī b. Arṭā[506] saying: 'This world is an enemy of God's friends[507] and of God's enemies. It distresses His friends, and deludes His enemies.' He also wrote to one of his governors: 'You have the power to oppress people. If you intend to wrong one, remember God's power over you. Know that if you cause any trouble to the people, the responsibility remains yours. Know, also, that God takes to account the oppressors on account of the oppressed. Farewell!'

This is how the admonition should be — for the masses or when the preacher does not know the specifics of the case. These exhortations are like the nutriments by which all the people can benefit. But, because of the lack of such as these preachers, the gate of learning from admonition is barred, sins predominate, and decay proceeds apace. The people are afflicted with preachers who parade rhymed prose and recite verses, take upon themselves to talk of that which is beyond the range of their knowledge, and imitate others. The masses lost their respect for the preacher. The preacher's words do not emanate from the heart so as to reach the heart. Rather, the speaker is arrogant, the listener burdened, and each of them is slipping and failing.

Seeking a physician, therefore, is the start of the treatment for the sick, and seeking the 'ulamā', is the beginning of treatment for sinners. This is one of the pillars and principles of treatment.

The second principle is forebearance (*ṣabr*). The point of the need for forebearance is that the patient's illness is prolonged because he takes what is harmful to him. He consumes that, either because he is unaware it is harmful, or because of the intensity of his craving. Such action has

two causes. What we have mentioned is the treatment for the unawareness. There remains, then, the treatment of craving, but we have already discussed the method of its treatment in the Book on Discipline of the Soul.[508] The gist of it is that, when his voracity for a harmful food becomes intense, the patient will perceive the magnitude of its harm. Then he should remove that from his scope of vision and not keep it. Then he will seek to distract himself from it with something which approximates it in form but not in virulence. Then, by virtue of fear, he should overcome the pain caused by abstention. Under all conditions, the bitterness of forbearance is inevitable, and thus he will treat the craving for transgression.

A young man, for example, when desire overcomes him, becomes incapable of controlling his eye, heart or limbs in the pursuit of his desire. He must realize the harm of his sin by examining the relevant fearful passages[509] in the Koran and in the Tradition. When his dread is intensified, he keeps his distance from the factors inciting his drive.

The external stimulant of desire is [57] the presence of the object of desire and gazing at it. The treatment is flight and isolation. The internal stimulant is the consumption of delicious foods. Its treatment lies in hunger and prolonged fasting. All this can be achieved only through forbearance. One shows forbearance, however, only from fear, but one fears only from knowledge, and, one gains knowledge only from insight and reflection or from listening and emulation. The first order of business, then, is attendance at invocational assemblies (*dhikr*); then, listening, with a heart devoid of other engagements, devoted to attention; then reflection on it unto perfect understanding. Thereupon fear will certainly be aroused. With fear rising, forbearance will be facilitated, and the requisites of seeking treatment will develop. Behind that lie divine assistance toward success and divine facilitation.

One who gives, of his heart, proper attention, perceives the dread [of sin] and fear of God, expects recompense and CONFIRMS THE REWARD MOST FAIR,[510] God eases him to Easing.[511] BUT AS FOR HIM WHO IS A MISER AND SELF-SUFFICIENT AND CRIES LIES TO THE REWARD MOST FAIR,[512] God will ease him TO THE HARDSHIP.[513] Only the clarification of the paths of guidance falls upon the prophets. Yet, TO GOD BELONGS THE FIRST AND THE LAST.[514, 515]

You might assert:

The entire matter reverts then to [a question of] faith, because renunciation of sin is impossible without forbearance; forbearance is possible

only through the experience of fear; fear sets in only through knowledge; knowledge is attained solely through confirming [the belief in] the magnitude of injury caused by sins, and confirmation of the magnitude of sins' harm is confirmation of the belief in God and His Apostle, which is faith. It appears, then, that one who persists in sin does so only because he is not a believer.

Know, that this persistence is not due to the loss of faith but rather to its weakness, inasmuch as every believer believes firmly that transgression is a cause of alienation from God, and is the cause of punishment in the hereafter. The reason, however, for his falling into sin is manifold.

Firstly, the promised punishment is concealed and not in [immediate] attendance. The soul is predisposed to being influenced by what is at hand. The effect upon the soul of the promised chastisement is weak compared to the impact of that which is present.

Secondly, the gratification of the cravings leading to sin are consummate and they immediately grab the throat. Because of habituation and custom, — habit serving as the fifth element[516] — [this pressure] is vigorous and overpowers the soul. The soul finds it hard to shift from the immediate to the fear of the future. That is why it says: NO INDEED; BUT YOU LOVE THE HASTY WORLD AND LEAVE BE THE HEREAFTER,[517] and, NAY, BUT YOU PREFER THE PRESENT LIFE.[518] The Prophet expressed how difficult this is in his sayings: 'Paradise is encircled by adversities, and hellfire by cravings';[a] 'God created hellfire. Then He said to Gabriel: Go and look at it. He looked at it, then said: By Your Glory! No one who hears of it shall enter it. God then encircled it with the desires, then said again: Go look at it. He looked at it and said: By Your Glory! I am afraid that none shall remain who will not enter it. God created Paradise. He said to Gabriel: Go and look at it. He did, and said: By Your might! Everyone who hears will [seek] to enter it. God then surrounded it with adversities and said: Go and look at it. He did, and said: By Your might! I am afraid that none shall enter.'[b] Thus the immediate oppressiveness of the desires, and the relegation of punishment into the future are two obvious causes in the self-abandon despite the presence of the basic faith. Nobody who, while sick and because of his thirst, drinks ice water denies, thereby, the basis of medicine. Nor does he deny the fact that ice water is harmful for him. But the craving overcomes him, and the pain of desisting is supreme, so that the anticipated pain seems minimized.

Thirdly, every believing sinner is, generally, determined to repent and

to atone the evil through pious deeds. Further, it has been promised that such will restore him. Continued hope, however, prevails over the natural dispositions, and man keeps postponing repentance and atonement. Yet, since his hope is for divine help towards success in repentance, he may often proceed despite faith toward sin.

Fourthly, every convinced believer maintains that sins do not necessitate chastisement to the extent of precluding forgiveness. [58] He sins, therefore, and anticipates forgiveness trusting in God's generosity.

These are four causes that lead to persistence in sin, despite the survival of the basic faith.

Certainly, the sinner might come up with a fifth reason, that impairs that basic faith. Namely, he may doubt the authenticity of the prophets. This is unbelief. He is like the one whom the physician cautioned about consuming what would, in his ill state, harm him. If the man cautioned does not consider the warner a medical authority, the patient may deny or doubt the physician. He will, therefore, pay no attention to the doctor. But such is unbelief.

You might say:

What, then, is the treatment for the five causes? I say that it is reflection (*fikr*).

That is that man persuade himself in the first instance, i.e., the relegation of punishment, that everything that is to come, is [truly] coming; that, for those who watch, the morrow is nigh, and that death is closer to everyone than his shoe lace; what shall make him know, perhaps the Hour is nigh,[519] and when that which has been put off takes place it is merely the consummation of the prophetic message. He should remind himself that, in this world, he is weary forever for fear of something in the future. Thus, a man travels overseas and undergoes hardship of journeys for the sake of gain which he thinks he might need at another time. Yet if he falls ill, and a Christian physician tells him that drinking cold water will harm him and lead to his death, and cold water is, to his mind, the most delicious of things, he abandons drinking it, despite the fact that the pain of death is only of an instant, if he did not fear what follows it, and departure from this world is [anyhow] inescapable. Yet what is the proportion between his existence in this world to his absence for ever and ever! Let him consider how quickly he is going to abandon his pleasures at the instruction of a non-Muslim with no miracle to support his medicine. Then he will say: 'How does it befit my intelligence that the word of the prophets, supported by miracles, should be inferior in my eyes to that of a Christian who claims [the

knowledge of] medicine without any [supporting] miracle and without any confirmation except by the common folk? How can the torment of hellfire be less, to me, than the torment of disease, when each day in the hereafter is like fifty thousand years of this world?'

Through this same contemplation he treats the delight which is overcoming him. He will force himself to abandon it by saying: 'If I am unable to renounce my delights during the days of my life which are few, how, then, shall I ever be able to do so? If I am not able to endure the pain of forbearance, how, then, could I withstand the pain of hellfire? If I am unable to renounce the vanities of this world despite its vexations, disturbances, and the blend of its delight and grief, how can I forgo the bliss of the hereafter?

As for postponement of repentance, he can treat it by reflection on [the fact] that most of the anguish of the people of hellfire stems from procrastination, as the procrastinator builds on what is not his, namely immortality. Yet perhaps he will not survive, and, if he survives, he may be unable to desist tomorrow, just as he is unable to abstain today. I wish I knew; did he not fail, in the present, only because of the triumph of craving, which craving is not going to leave him on the morrow, but rather is compounded since it is reinforced through habituation. Now, the craving which a man reinforced by habit is not like the one which he did not reinforce. Because of this the procrastinators perish, for they suppose there is a difference between things identical. They do not realize that all days are similar in that forgoing cravings is always painful, on any day.

A fitting analogy is: one who needs to uproot a tree but sees that it is strong and will not be extirpated except with great difficulty. He says: 'I will put it off for a year and then come back to it.' But he knows that the longer the tree survives, the more its deeprootedness increases, while the older he gets the more he becomes weak. There is, then, no stupidity grosser than his in the world: when he, in his prime, fails to stand up to the weak, and begins to anticipate triumph over the rival while he himself is getting weak and the weak one is getting strong.

As for the fourth idea, i.e., the expectation of God's forgiveness, its treatment is as above. The man is like one who dissipates all his property, leaving himself and his family paupers, expecting that God, in His generosity, will provide for him the discovery of a treasure amidst ruins. The possibility of forgiveness of sins [in such a manner] is like this possibility. He is like one who fears spoliation at the hand of oppressors in his country, and [yet], he leaves his treasures in the courtyard of his

home. He was able to bury and hide them but did not do so. He said: 'I look to God's generosity, it may bring either inadvertence or distress upon the pillaging tyrant so that he will miss my home, or, when he turns to my home he will be struck down at the gate! Both death and inadvertence are possible. Such things occur in fictional stories, and I anticipate the like from divine kindness.' One who anticipates this, anticipates the possible. Yet he is extremely silly and ignorant. For it may not happen and not be so.[520]

[59] As for the fifth cause, i.e., doubt, this is unbelief. It is to be treated with those elements which would make him learn the veracity of the prophets. But this would take long. It is possible, however, to treat it with simple knowledge which would befit the bounds of his intelligence. He should be asked: 'Is the truth of what the prophets said, supported as they are by miracles, possible? Or, do you maintain that you know that it is impossible, in the same manner as you know the impossibility of one person being in two places at the same time?' If he says: 'I know that it is as impossible as the latter,' then he is stupid and idiotic. It would seem that such creatures do not exist among sensible people. But if he said: 'I am in doubt about it,' then let him be asked: 'If some unknown person were to tell you, as you were leaving your meal at home for an instant, that a viper had licked it, and put its poison in it, and you could admit his truthfulness, would you then eat the meal or, even be it the most delicious of foods, would you forgo it?' He would answer: 'I would most certainly leave it. I would say: if he has lied, I shall merely miss this food. To forgo it may be hard but sensible. If, on the other hand, he was right, I might lose my life. Compared to the discomfort of abstention from food and its waste, death is harsher.' Say to him then: 'By Almighty God, how can you defer the truth of all the prophets, despite all their miracles, and the veracity of all the saints, scholars and sages, nay, of all categories of sensible people — I do not mean thereby the ignorant of the masses but rather those possessed of intellect — in favour of the truth of one unknown man who may have some purpose of his own?'

All reasonable men believe in the Last Day and acknowledge reward and punishment, even if they differ as to particulars. If they are right, you are on the brink of a chastisement which is to continue forever. If, on the other hand, they are wrong, you miss nothing save some cravings of this passing and vexatious world. There can remain no hesitation for him, if he is intelligent, following this reflection, for there is no comparison between a lifetime and eternity Nay, were we to presume that the world is filled with a speck, and that a bird gathers, every million years, one granule of it, still surely the speck would come to an end, and eternity would not be diminished at all. How could a sensible man's mind waver about forgoing desires for say, a hundred years, for the sake of bliss eternal? That is why Abū l-'Alā' Aḥmad b. Sulaymān at-Tanūkhū al-Ma'arrī[521] said:

> The astrologer and physician both of them
> Deny the resurrection of the body.
> "Oh, get ye gone," said I; if your belief
> 'Tis upon you perdition falls, not me.[522]

Therefore, 'Alī said to one whose intelligence fell short of true understanding and was a doubter: 'If what I said is correct, we will all be saved; if not, I am saved and you perish.' That is to say, the sensible man follows the path of safety in all situations.

You might ask:

These matters are evident but they are attained only through reflection. But what about the hearts? They give up reflection about these matters, and consider [them] too burdensome. What is the treatment for the hearts by which to return them to reflection, especially in the case of a man who believes in the basis and ramification of religion?

Know, then, that the impediment to reflection is twofold. Firstly, functional reflection is the reflection of the punishment of the hereafter, its terrors and afflictions, the grief of sinners over their exclusion from the everlasting bliss. This reflection is stinging and painful to the heart. The heart, therefore, shuns it, and takes delight in reflecting on worldly matters for comfort and relaxation. Secondly, reflection is an immediate impediment distracting from the worldly delights and the gratification of cravings. Every man, in every state and with every breath, has a craving which overtakes him and enslaves him. His intellect then becomes subservient to his craving. Therefore, man is busy to set his ruse [to gratify it], and it becomes his delight to pursue the ruse, or to start the gratification of his craving. But reflection holds him back from that.

To treat these two obstructions, he should say to his heart: 'How great is your foolishness in being wary of reflecting on death and what follows it, because of the pain caused by the mention of death, despite the disdain for the pain of struggling with death. How will you endure sustaining it, whenever it happens, seeing that [at the same time], you are unable to endure the very admission of death and what follows it, and

are pained thereby? To treat the second impediment, i.e., that reflection makes you miss worldly pleasures is graver and more decisive. For, pleasures of the hereafter are infinite and unmarred, while the worldly pleasure are quickly obliterated and are mixed with vexations. In this life there is no pleasure free of worry. [The more so] as in repenting of transgressions and in concern for obedience lies delight in conferring with God, repose in perceiving and obeying Him [60] and constant closeness to Him. If the obedient had no other recompense for his deeds than what he feels of the sweetness of obedience and the spirit of intimacy in converse with God, that would surely be sufficient. The more so, when to this is added the bliss of the hereafter. Certainly, this pleasure does not occur at the initial stage of repentance, but after man endures [in penitence] for a long time, the good having become habit as before the evil was. The soul is receptive — as you train it, so it becomes habituated. Good is habit, and evil is [sheer] obstinacy.

These reflections, therefore, induce fear which in turn induces the ability to forgo pleasures. The stimulant of these reflections is exhortation of the preachers, and admonitions which penetrate into the heart through innumerable appropriate motifs. Reflection then becomes consonant with temper, and the heart tends toward it. The cause which projects harmony between the temper and the reflection, which [itself] is the cause of goodness, is termed succour (*tawfīq*), inasmuch as succour is the fusion of will and the faculty which is obedience useful unto the hereafter.

It is related in a long tradition that 'Ammār b. Yāsir[523] arose and said to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib: 'O Commander of the Faithful! Inform us about unbelief. Upon what is it built?' 'Alī answered: 'It is built upon four props: on rudeness; blindness; heedlessness; and doubt. One who is rude scorns the truth, proclaims the false and hates the learned.[524] One who is blind forgets the invocation [of God's name]. One who is heedless swerves from good sense. One who doubts, the desires mislead him, then, only to be seized by sighing and regret, and what he was not considering [possible] concerning God appears to him now.'

What we have mentioned explains some of the damages wrought by neglect of reflection. So much for [the discussion of] repentance.

If forbearance is one of the pillars of continued repentance, it is imperative to explain it. We will, therefore, discuss it, God willing, in a separate treatise.

APPENDIX A

The quotations from the ḥadīth lore have been checked with the help of (1) the notes of the editor of the Arabic text, and (2) the *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmame*, ed. by A. J. Wensinck, J. P. Mensing, J. Brugman; 7 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1936-1969).

Ibn Hanbal's *Musnad* is referred to in the old (recently reprinted) edition; Bukhārī, in the Krehl-Juynboll edition; Tirmidhī, in the edition by A. R. M. 'Uthmān, Cairo 1965; Ibn Māja, in the edition by M. F. 'Abd al-Bāqī, Cairo 1372-3/1952-3; Dārimī, in the Damascus edition, 1349 A.H.; Muslim, in the Cairo (1283) edition. The references to Ibn Ḥanbal are by volume and page; the other references are by numbers of treatise and section. E.G. IM 37:7 = Ibn Māja, Zuhd, section seven. (References are noted in the translation by lower case letters.)

Key

n.c. = non-canonic. The saying in question does not occur in the canonized collections, though it may appear in later collections.
n.t. = not traceable.
B = Bukhārī.
D = Dārimī.
H = Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal.
IM = Ibn Māja.
M = Muslim.
T = Tirmidhī.

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32 *a*. H. I 376, VI 264; IM 37:30 (N4252).
32 *b*. IM 5:78 (N 1081).
34 *a*. IM 37:30 (N 4250); H IV 271, 273, 283.

35 *a.* IM 37:30 (N4249) humouristic note: in his rejoicing and utter confusion the man verges on blasphemy.
39 *a.* IM 36:3 (N 3936).
44 *a.* D 8:26.
45 *a.* H V 153, 236. Cf. IM 37:30 (N 4253).
46 *a.* ? B 8:15-16.
b. ?
49 *a.* n.t.
51 *a.* H IV 395, 404.
b. H III 238; IM 37:30 (N 4248).
c. n.c.
d. H I 289.
e. n.t.
f. H III 29, 41.
g. Cf. H V 236.
56 *a.* H VI 240.
b. H II 400; B 80:4.
c. H II 201.
57 *a.* The editor points out that in this section al-Ghazzālī depends on Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī.
b. n.c.
58 *a.* H III 3; B 81:32.
59 *a.* ?
b. B 55:23, 86:44; H III 131, 134.
c. n.t.
64 *a.* M 2:16; H II 400; B 9:6.
66 *a.* n.c.; attributed to 'Alī.
67 *a.* H II 168, 173.
b. H II 244; B 79:1.
c. H II 377; B 65 on Koran 19:1.
69 *a.* H V 170; B 81:51.
70 *a.* Cf. H IV 226.
72 *a.* H III 230.
73 *a.* B 97:15, 22, 55.
75 *a.* H I 379.
76 *a.* Cf. B 59:8.
b. n.c.
c. H I 173, 174; B 75:3.
d. H I 380; B 78:53.
78 *a.* Cf. IM, Muqaddima 7 (N 59).

80 *a.* n.c.
b. H VI 41, 208.
c. H II 313, 370; IM, N 4328.
81 *a.* B 2:32.
82 *a.* B 80:4.
83 *a.* B 78:60.
84 *a.* H IV 357.
86 *a.* n.c.
88 *a.* D 5:2.
b. D 20:74.
89 *a.* n.c.
b. H VI 157.
90 *a.* H III 61f.
91 *a.* H V 348.
93 *a.* H III 172.
102 *a.* n.c.
b. H II 409, 444, 476; B 24:60.
103 *a.* T, Du'ā 128.
104 *a.* n.c.
b. H III 387.
c. n.c.
105 *a.* H III 198; IM, N 4251.
106 *a.* IM, N 76.
109 *a.* n.t.
b. n.c.
c. H V 152.
d. IM, N 4253.
e. n.c.
f. H IV 393, 403.
110 *a.* B 80:2 (?), H IV 166 (?).
113 *a.* H IV 151.
118 *a.* n.c.
b. n.c.
c. n.c.
120 *a.* IM 36:22 (N 4022).
b. n.t.
121 *a.* n.c.
b. n.c.
122 *a.* B 78:76.
b. Cf. IM 37:1 (N 4102).

123 *a*. T 34:65.
127 *a*. H II 260, 380.
b. T 36:21 (N 2685).

APPENDIX B

Index of Persons Mentioned

The numbers refer to the pages of the Arabic edition which are indicated in the translation in brackets.

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NOTES

Abbreviation Key

T — al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, vol. 4, pp. 1-60.
MS — Manuscript referred to in, Hitti, et al., *Descriptive Catalogue of the Garrett Collection of Arabic Manuscripts in the Princeton University Library*, (Princeton, 1938) no. 1481.
Z — al-Zayyid al-Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, *Itḥāf al-Sādah al-Muttaqīn bi-Sharḥ Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*.
C — text of T contained in body of Z.
D — text of T contained in the margin of Z.
Ṁ — M. Maimonides, *Yad Ha-Hazaqah: Mishne Torah*.
K — Koran citation (sura: verse).
W — S. Wilzer, "Untersuchungen zu Ġazzālīs Kitāb at-Tauba", *Der Islam* 32 (1957), pp. 237-309.
W(2) — S. Wilzer, "Untersuchungen zu Ġazzālīs Kitāb at-Tauba", *Der Islam* 33 (1958), pp. 51-120.
A-G — G. C. Anawati, and L. Gardet, *Mystique Musulmame*.
EI — *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition.
SEI — *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*.
TB — Babylonian Talmud.
Studies — H. Lazarus-Yafeh, Studies in al-Ghazzālī.

1. Muḥammad Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1145-1205/1732-91), a distinguished philologist and lexicographer, was born in India and lived, for the greater part of his life, in Egypt. His commentary, *The Precious Gift of the God-fearing Masters*, was printed in thirteen volumes in Fas (1883-96), and in ten volumes in Cairo (1893). Cf. C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, I 422, II 287f., and Suppl. II 398f.
2. e.g., Genesis 13:33; Exodus 33:11; Leviticus 25:27; I Samuel 18:6.

3. e.g. Deuteronomy 4:30, 30:2; I Kings 8:47-8; Jeremiah 3:7, 12, 14, 22, 15:7, 18:8, 44:5; Ezekiel 3:19, 13:22, 18:21, 23, 27, 30, 33:9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19; Hosea 5:4, 7:10, 14:2, 3.
4. e.g., Deuteronomy 13:18; II Kings 23:26; Jeremiah 4:8, 23:20, 30:24.
5. W(2), p.82.
6. Jonah 3:10. The inhabitants of Ninveh did, in fact, effect an acceptable 'return' and were forgiven.
7. II Kings 23:25. Here the repentance and reforms of King Josiah are lauded. This theme is especially evident in Ezekiel, e.g., 3:19, 33:11, 18:23.
8. e.g., Leviticus 4:1-31.
9. Leviticus 16.
10. e.g., Ezekiel 33:14f.
11. *Encyclopedia of Ethics and Religion*, s.v. repentance.
12. Zachariah 1:3; Malachi 3:7.
13. As, for example, the tension between and synthesis of ritual atonement and repentance. TB, *Yoma 85b.*
14. E. Urback, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, vol.I, p.463.
15. *Encyclopedia of Ethics and Religion*, s. v. repentance.
16. E. Urbach, *The Sages*, vol. I, pp. 462f.
17. TB, *Pesachim* 54a.
18. TB, *Yoma* 86b.
19. TB, *Berakhot*, 34b.
20. H. A. Wolfson, *Philo*, pp. 252f.; W, p. 291.
21. Philo of Alexandria, c.20 B.C.E.-50 C.E.
22. H. A. Wolfson, *Philo*, pp. 252, 255.
23. Matthew 3:2.
24. Mark 1:15, 2:17; Matthew 2:17, 9:13, 12:41; Luke 5:32, 11:32.
25. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, s.v. repentance.
26. Galations 2:20. Cf. Colossians 3:9f.
27. Galations 2:20; John 3:3, 15, 18, 6:47, 14:1.
28. W(2), pp. 77f.
29. Luke 13:5.
30. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, s. v. repentance.
31. Luke 15:4-10.
32. W(2), p.71; J. Obermann, *Der philosophische und religiöse Subjektivismus Ghazālī*, p.233, note 3.
33. e.g., K 2:155 (160).
34. e.g., K 2:51 (54).

35. e.g., K 2:35 (37).
36. K 40:2(3).
37. K 13:29(30), 25:71.
38. K 3:84(90), 4:21 (17), 4:22 (18), 9:105 (104), 42:24 (25).
39. K 9:113 (112), 66:5.
40. e.g., K 2:35 (37).
41. K 2:222.
42. In dating the Koranic citations I have used the chronologies of Muir, Nöldeke, Grimme and the Egyptian edition of the Koran as given in W. M. Watt, *Bell's Introduction to the Qur'an*, (Edinburgh, 1970), pp. 206-213.
43. K 20:120 (122).
44. K 2:35 (37), 51 (54), 122 (128), 155 (160), 4:20 (16), 67 (64), 9:105 (104), 119 (118), 49:12.
45. e.g., K 12:53, 14:39 (36).
46. e.g., K 7:149 (physical), 7:167 (168) (religious).
47. e.g., K 17:27 (25), 38:18 (19).
48. e.g., K 31:14 (15), 39:11 (8).
49. W(2), p. 73, note 11.
50. K 3:12 (14).
51. K 34:10.
52. K 60:4.
53. W(2), pp. 77f.
54. K 4:22 (18).
55. K 4:21 (17), 8:39 (38), 9:5.
56. K 19:61 (60), 20:84 (82), 25:70f., 28:67.
57. K 66:8.
58. K 2:222.
59. Cf. SEI, s.v. Khaṭāi'a.
60. K 3:129 (135).
61. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, s.v. Arabs (Ancient).
62. K 58:9-10 (8-9).
63. Leviticus 16.
64. K 11:116 (114).
65. e.g., K 2:75 (18); 4:112; 26:82.
66. SEI, s.v. Khaṭī'a.
67. K 28:15 (16).
68. K 2:75 (81), 85:11.
69. Where both man and god(s) are locked into an immutable causality. Cf. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, s.v. Sin

(Buddhist).
70. K 2:284, 3:124 (129).
71. K 42:35 (37), 53:33 (32).
72. W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual: A Study of al-Ghazzālī*, pp. 20ff.
73. R. A. Nicholson, *The Idea of Personality in Sufism*, p. 57.
74. EI, s.v. al-Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad; EI, s.v. al-Ghazzālī, Aḥmad. Cf. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Classical Islam*, pp. 151ff.; SEI, s.v. madrasa.
75. Al-Ghazzālī, *al-Munqidh min aḍ-Ḍalāl*; W. M. Watt published an English translation in his work, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazzālī*, pp. 19-85; a Hebrew translation was published by H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *Ha-Podeh min Ha-T'ayah Veha-Ṭa'ut*.
76. W. M. Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazzālī*, p. 12.
77. W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual*, p. 20.
78. *Studies*, p. 365.
79. al-Ghazzālī, *al-Munqidh*, p. 126.
80. EI, s.v. al-Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad.
81. Al-Ghazzālī viewed withdrawal and extreme asceticism, except a temporary healing regimen, to be as bad as hedonism. Cf. *Studies*, pp. 429f.
82. Al-Ghazzālī, *al-Munqidh*, pp. 140f. In reference to al-Ghazzālī as renewer, see EI, s.v. al-Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad.
83. W. M. Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazzālī*, p. 12, L. Zolondek, *Book XX of al-Ghazzālī's Iḥyā'*, p. 16.
84. Professor Lazarus-Yafeh's pioneering study of al-Ghazzālī's linguistic usage is very enlightening in this area. She is able to highlight al-Ghazzālī's commitment and contribution as teacher and guide. *Studies*, pp. 44-248.
85. For a partial listing, see *Studies*, pp. 46ff.
86. P. K. Hitti, *Makers of Arab History*, p. 156; W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual*, p. 151; L. Zolondek, *Book XX of al-Ghazzālī's Iḥyā'*, pp. 1ff.
87. *Studies*, p. 51.
88. Al-Ghazzālī, "The Beginning of Guidance", *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazzālī*, trans. W. M.Watt, pp. 107, 151f.
89. T, p. 27; *Studies*, p. 349. The idea of such a division was quite common in medieval Islam. It probably was introduced from the Greek philosophical tradition, and also found its way into Judaism and Christianity. See, *Studies*, p. 391, note 2.
90. *Studies*, p. 362.

91. *Studies*, pp. 352f.
92. W(2), pp. 75f.
93. e.g., Free Will and Predestination, The Last Judgement, Belief and Heresy, *Ta'wil*, etc.
94. *Studies*, p. 373.
95. W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual*, pp. 151, 153f., 165. Cf. al-Ghazzālī, *The Book of Knowledge*, trans. N.A. Faris, pp. 3-5.
96. W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual*, pp. 176f. For an interesting survey of the place of the religious commandments in the philosophy of al-Ghazzālī, see the chapter by that name in *Studies*, pp. 412-436.
97. *Studies*, pp. 412f. Law is the starting point on the road to gnosis (*ma'rifa*). Many sufis viewed law, therefore, as obsolete once one has embarked on the Way. They tended, then, to libertinism. Not so al-Ghazzālī. For him the Law remains the basis upon which man elevates himself and it is not to be abrogated. See, W, p. 262.
98. *Studies*, p. 378.
99. T, p. 11
100. W, p. 251.
101. T, p. 11; W, pp. 252ff.
102. T, p. 27. Cf. R. A. Nicholson, "Mysticism", *The Legacy of Islam*, eds. Arnold and Guillaume, pp. 213f.
103. T, p. 25; W, p. 255.
104. Cf. E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, pp. 413-443.
105. *Studies*, p. 352.
106. W, pp. 258, 281.
107. Cf. K 2:191 (195), 222, 9:4, 7, 109 (108).
108. T. p. 31.
109. W, p. 256.
110. K. 2:274 (272), 6:52, 13:22, 18:27(28), and others.
111. TB, *Berakhot*, 17b.
112. M, *Yesodei Ha-Torah*, 1:1,6.
113. M, *Teshubah*, 8:1, 2.
114. W, pp. 257ff.
115. T, p. 23; W, pp. 256, 259.
116. W, p. 270.
117. *Studies*, pp. 321ff.
118. There is a parallel concept in rabbinic Judaism. TB, *Avot*, 4:21.
119. T, p. 19; *Studies*, pp. 321ff.
120. *Studies*, pp. 322f.
121. TB, *Avodah Zarah*, 3a.

122. TB, *Berakhot*, 56b.
123. T, p. 24.
124. T, pp. 24, 38, *Studies*, pp. 322, 425f.
125. W, p. 260.
126. T, pp. 4, 36; *Studies*, pp. 429f. Cf. J. Obermann, *Der philosophische und religiöse Subjektivismus Ghazālīs*.
127. T, p. 11; W(2), pp. 78f.
128. Cf. T, p. 29.
129. T, pp. 9f.; W, pp. 246f.
130. T, pp. 25f.
131. W, p. 290. Cf. I Kings 8:46; II Chronicles 6:36; Ecclesiastes 7:21.
132. Genesis 8:21.
133. T, pp. 7f., 16, 50; W, pp. 294f.
134. T, pp. 13, 45. Goldziher has pointed out the parallel between *galb salīm* and the biblical *leb shālēm*. See W, p. 278, note 38. Cf. I Kings 8:61, 11:4, 15:3; II Kings 20:3; Isaiah 38:3; I Chronicles 29:9; II Chronicles 19:9.
135. T, pp. 24-32.
136. T, p. 50.
137. T, p. 2.
138. T, p. 10. Al-Ghazzālī does, however, give a mystical interpretation in his book, *Mīzān al-'amal*.
139. W, pp. 249f. Cf. SEI, s.v. 'iṣma and sīra.
140. Cf. W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual*, pp. 82-86.
141. W, p. 250.
142. T, pp. 52f.
143. T, pp. 10, 16, 34.
144. T, pp. 49f.; W, p. 274.
145. T, pp. 7, 9; *Studies*, pp. 357-363.
146. W, pp. 275ff.
147. T, pp. 12f. Cf. TB, *Avot*, 4:2.
148. T, p. 10; *Studies*; pp. 312-320.
149. W, pp. 289f.
150. W, pp. 278f.; M.G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 1, pp. 158f.
151. W, p. 279; G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, vol. 2, pp. 10ff.
152. W, p. 280; *Studies*, pp. 412f.
153. M. Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, I, 54; III, 27, 28, 33, 54.
154. Nonetheless Maimonides emphasized his belief in the ongoing obligatoriness of the commandments. M. *Yesodei Ha-Torah*, 9:1.

155. *Studies*, pp. 412-436.
156. These debates often began and developed within a specific political context. The khārijī groups, for example, originated in the upheaval surrounding the caliphate of 'Alī. Most of these groups developed ideologies which became progressively less centered in politics. The political influence of these ideologies, with the exception of shi'ism, were negligible in the time of al-Ghazzālī. The political context, therefore, is not mentioned. See, W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*.
157. K 2:75 (81).
158. K 4:35 (31).
159. W. M. Watt, *Islam and the Integration of Society*, pp. 110-114.
160. W(2), p. 51; W. M. Watt, *Islam and the Integration of Society*, pp. 94-104.
161. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, p. 67; SEI, s.v. al-Mu'tazila.
162. W(2), p. 52; W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, pp. 32-34.
163. W(2), p. 52; Cf. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, pp. 82-89.
164. W(2), p. 67.
165. T, pp. 3, 26ff. There are various levels of Paradise (i.e. salvation). Man's proximity to God will conform to what he has earned in this life. Cf. EI, s.v. al-djanna.
166. T, p. 29; W, p. 270 (text and note 32).
167. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, p. 17. Andrae's ideas of salvation through the community of Islam is, at best, misleading by his use of christologically influenced terminology. W, p. 186.
168. This is still consistent with al-Ghazzālī positing the transfer of credits or debits between sinners and victims of injustice. T, p. 30.
169. W(2), p. 110.
170. W, p. 300.
171. The dimension of national covenant found in Judaism is not to be found in Islam. Cf. W(2), p. 82.
172. T, pp. 50f. Cf. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, vol. 1, Bk 1.
173. W, p. 286. Note the difference between al-Ghazzālī's conception of the *'ulamā'*; the priests of the Church who had special powers of dispensation and absolution; and the shi'ī imāms who were con-

sidered infallible and charismatic.

174. T, pp. 16f.
175. T, p. 32; W, p. 308.
176. T, p. 33. This is parallel to the rabbinic category of *hōteh u-maḥtī* (one who sins and causes others to follow suit which is the only category of sinner universally condemned by talmudic authorities to eternal perdition. Cf/ TN. *Sanhedrin*, Chapter 11; TB, *Avot* 5:21.
177. T, pp. 17-20.
178. T, p. 32.
179. W, p. 248; W(2), p. 85.
180. T, p. 16.
181. *Studies*, p. 358 (based on al-Ghazzālī's *Kitāb Sharḥ 'Ajā'ib al-qalb*).
182. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, p. 31.
183. W(2), p. 58. The Mu'tazila's position also had a political dimension. They were involved in the 'Abbāsid movement and, like the *Khawārij*, they fought the Umayyads. Cf. SEI, s.v. al-mu'tazila.
184. M. G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 1, p. 264.
185. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, pp. 86ff. There was an expression: 'More obscure than the *kasb* of the ash'arīs.'
186. Philippians 2:12f.
187. T, pp. 5f. Cf. W(2), p. 95.
188. T, pp. 2f.; W, p. 249; W(2), p. 56; *Studies*, p. 353.
189. T, pp. 6f.; W(2), p. 91 (for a treatment of the parable see note 1 on p. 91).
190. W, p. 282.
191. A. J. Wensinck, *La pensée de Ghazzālī*, p. 143.
192. W(2), pp. 97f.
193. T. J. DeBoer, *The History of Philosophy in Islam*, pp. 57f.
194. T, pp. 4, 24, 27; W(2), pp. 56f.
195. T, p. 50.
196. W(2), p. 60.
197. J. Obermann, *Der philosophische und religiöse Subjektivismus Ghazālīs*, pp. 232ff.
198. Ibid., p. 239.
199. T, pp. 30, 45; W(2), p. 68.
200. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, pp. 66ff.; SEI, s.v. al-Mu'tazila; W. p. 254; W(2), p. 114. (The other major proposition was God's unity — i.e., no attributes separate from His essence.)

201. W, p. 254.
202. T, p. 28; W(2), pp. 63ff.
203. T, p. 27; W(2), p. 57.
204. T, pp. 13ff.; W(2), pp. 115f.
205. T, p. 30.
206. T, p. 15.
207. *Studies*, pp. 382-388.
208. Al-Ghazzālī discusses the necessarily subjective and limited ability of the gnostic to convey to others his acquired insights. Cf. T, pp. 28f.
209. Such borrowing, quite often literal, was not unusual or negatively valued. Cf. *Studies*, pp. 35f., note 20.
210. Numbers in brackets refer to page in T.
211. MS محمد وآله الطيبين وصحبه الاكرمين.
212. MS من هول المطلع ومن يوم العرض والحساب
213. MS صلوة عليه السلام om.
214. Z, p. 497; Ru'ba b. Bī'a of the Tā'y tribe lost his recalcitrant son Akhzam, and was attacked by the sons of Akhzam, his grandsons. He exclaimed in rhyme that he recognized therein the self-same disposition that he had observed in Akhzam. This became proverbial of the recognition of inherited characteristics.
215. MS بعد ان in both cases, delete بعد ما.
216. MS . . . is necessary in extricating the human essence from the Satanic impurities. فى تخلص جوهر الانسان عن خبايث الشيطان.
217. MS . . . lesser of the two evils. اهون الشرين.
218. MS تساق.
219. MS واذ.
220. MS المانعة لها.
221. MS أقسام الناس.
222. MS فالعلم اوّل والحال ثان والفعل ثالث.
223. MS أشرق — سطع.
224. d. 283/896
225. MS اتتذر.
226. T قائد; MS قايد; Read قائد.
227. MS يهتدى.
228. K 24:35

229. MS تعلق.
230. K 24:31.
231. K 66:8.
232. MS مأخوذا.
233. K 2:222.
234. K 37:94(96).
235. MS البصاير.
236. MS قوة الشهوة.
237. K 33:62.
238. Koranic idiom. Cf. K 16:79(77) and 54:50.
239. T ظهر رها ; Read ظهورها.
240. K 54:49.
241. K 54:50.
242. يـ الكاتب.
243. عالم الملكوت and عالم الملك. Cf. al-Ghazzālī, *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith*, trans. N. A. Faris, p.119.
244. Cf. K 8:17.
245. K 9:14.
246. Cf. K 72:27.
247. MS رجله.
248. MS فلما.
249. Cf. al-Ghazzālī, *The Book of Knowledge*, trans. N. A. Faris, p.223; *Studies*, pp.357-363.
250. MS الاّ أصل.
251. Cf. K 9:21 and 76:20.
252. Read اختبارهم.
253. K 36:8-10.
254. MS حين يزني om.
255. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, vol. 1, Bk 1. The subject raised here is discussed in section six.
256. K 24:31.
257. al-Ghazzālī, *Foundations*, p. 119; *Studies*, pp. 264-348.
258. K 17:64(62).
259. K 48:2.
260. MS في وجه.
261. K 83:14.

262. MS جميع عمر كلّ واحد.
263. MS تهيا.
264. MS كمال الحياة.
265. MS العباد.
266. d. 234/849-50.
267. MS جوهر.
268. K 34:53(54).
269. K 63:10-11.
270. K 4:22(18).
271. K 4:21(17).
272. Legendary figure of pre-Islamic times to whom great wisdom is attributed. Cf. SEI, s.v. Lukmān.
273. C اسر.
274. K 2:38(40).
275. K 23:8 and 70:32.
276. K 91:9.
277. Read وسخ.
278. K 42:24(25).
279. K 40:2(3).
280. MS لا تحصى كثرة.
281. d. 713.
282. K 17:27(25).
283. Ibn 'Iyāḍ, d. 802.
284. d. 692-3.
285. MS عليهما om.
286. d. 32 A.H.
287. MS عبد كريم.
288. K 8:39(38).
289. A Jew of Medina who accepted Islam, d. 43/663-4.
290. The second Caliph, d. 23/644.
291. Early Sufi who was among the first to develop the teachings of gnosis (*ma'rifa*), 180/796-246/861. Cf. EI, s.v. Dhū 'l-Nūn, Abū 'l-Fayḍ.
292. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 3, Bk 1.
293. K 79:24.
294. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 3.
295. MS الى.

296. K 4:35(31).
297. K 53:33(32).
298. The son of Egypt's conqueror, 'Amr. See EI, s.v. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ.
299. One of the earliest Muslims, he was a companion of the Prophet and a Koran reader, d. 32/652-3. See EI, s.v. Ibn Mas'ūd.
300. 68/687-8.
301. K 4:35(31).
302. d. 996.
303. MS امرئ om.
304. Made of wood of the arak tree.
305. Sa'd b. Mālik b. Sinān, 74/693-4.
306. K 4:35(31).
307. MS اثبات om.
308. K 51:56.
309. MS اصل om.
310. MS طرق.
311. Read غصب .
312. MS بغير.
313. MS and C فأولى ان لا يكون من الكبائر.
314. Read الربا.
315. A small coin of little value.
316. Mystic, author of Qūt al-Qulūb from which al-Ghazzālī drew much material, d. 386/998. Cf. EI, s.v. Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī.
317. MS and C عقوق.
318. C الرتبة.
319. C لا om.
320. C فان.
321. K 4:35(31).
322. MS and C من لا يشتهي.
323. d. 58/678.
324. MS وقال.
325. The great jurist, d. 204/820.
326. An intoxicating beverage made from raisins and dates.
327. K 29:42(43).
328. d. 110/729.
329. MS and C فانها أمك.

330. Z, p. 548. al-Zabīdī indicates that this refers to Jesus. Cf. Matthew 7:6.
331. MS وقدر عقولهم om.
332. MS علوا كبيرا om.
333. MS مثله.
334. K 29:42(43).
335. MS and C الملك.
336. CF. SEI, s.v. al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz.
337. K 2:111(117), 3:42(47), 3:52(59), 6:72(73), 16:42(40), 19:36(35), 36:82, 40:70(68).
338. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 1, Bk 2; available in Faris' translation.
339. Lit. - successful, victorious, winner.
340. Al-Janna, within the later theological speculation, is portrayed as a multi-leveled and gradated series of gardens. Cf. EI, s.v. al-Djanna.
341. Cf. K 83:15.
342. MS and C محترقا مع.
343. K 104:6-7.
344. *Diwan al-Mutanabbī*, ed. F. Dieterici, p. 8.
345. *Harīsa* - a sweet pastry made of flour, melted butter and sugar.
346. K 50:36(37).
347. al-Ghazzālī, *Knowledge*, p. 141.
348. K 17:87(85).
349. MS كان.
350. al-Ghazzālī, *Knowledge*, p. 141.
351. Cf. K 62:4.
352. Cf. K 2:99(105).
353. K 2:272(269).
354. K 6:91.
355. K 41:30; 46:12(13).
356. al-Ghazzālī, *Knowledge*, p. 94.
357. K 19:72-3(71-2).
358. 21/642-110/728. Preacher and ascetic of the Umayyad period. Had a profound influence on different types of personalities and is extensively quoted in Islamic literature. EI, s.v. Ḥasan al-Baṣrī.
359. MS اختلاف om.
360. K 41:46.
361. K 40:17.

362. K 53:40(39).
363. K 99:7-8.
364. K 4:44(40).
365. Cf. K 101-5.
366. Cf. K 56:26-37, 89(88).
367. Cf. K 33:72.
368. K 59:19.
369. Cf. K 53:7.
370. K 32:12.
371. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 4, Bk 5.
372. MS فيقبض ; C فتقتص.
373. Abū 'Abdallāh Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. Jalā' al-Baghdādī (III/IX cent.).
374. K 41:46.
375. K 4:44(40).
376. K 53:40-11.
377. K 74:41.
378. K 61:5.
379. K 13:12(11).
380. K 53:11.
381. Cf. EI, s.v. a'rāf.
382. MS كالحكم om.
383. 'Ā'isha bint Abī Bakr, wife of Muḥammad, d. 58/678.
384. See note 338 above.
385. K 32:17.
386. Woman mystic and saint, d. 185/801 (Palestine). Cf. SEI, s.v. Rābi'a al-Adawīya.
387. Evidently with reference to the proverb: [Find out who is going to be] the neighbour before [you take] the house.
388. K 29:64.
389. K 58:9(8)
390. K 9:68(67).
391. K 36:11(12).
392. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, cousin of the Prophet, d. 68/687-8.
393. A term covering folkloristic or moralistic stories preserved in various literary sources which because of their biblical or imagined context are related to the ancient Israelites. See EI, s.v. Isrā'īlīyāt.
394. *Dhikr* is remembering God with mind or tongue and glorifying Him with certain fixed phrases. There developed two lines in the exposition and function of *dhikr*, both within Sufi ranks (although not

exclusively). Firstly, *dhikr* is used as a liturgical device, part of the simple prayer regimen. Secondly, *dhikr* became a technique used in attaining the sufi *ittiḥād* [substantial identification] with God. Cf. EI, s.v. Dhikr.
395. C أمّا العلم فالنظر فيه نظر في سبب التوبة وتقويته وكماله بأسباب منها مجالسة الصالحين والذكرين بالله والسؤال عن شؤم المعاصي وما رتب عليها من العقوبات العاجلة وملازمة الشيخ أنفع من هذا كله فانه الدرياق النافع وسيأتي.
396. MS والفكر om.
397. On the basis of K 9:60 it was claimed that eight categories of people are entitled to benefits from the community alms. Cf. Th.W. Juynboll, *Handbuch des Islamischen Gesetzes*, pp. 106-7; Abū Shujā', and Ibn Qāsim al-Ghazzī, *Fatḥ al-Qarīb*, ed. and trans. L.W.C. Van den Berg, pp. 246ff.
398. Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī, 204/820, the great jurist.
399. K 11:116(114).
400. C and D وبأن.
401. See note 382 above.
402. Cf. K 4:94(92) and EI, vol. 1, p.25.
403. Contemporary of the Prophet and general in the early conquests, d. 21/641-2.
404. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥayā'*, vol. 2, Bk 4.
405. MS يغيبهم.
406. Cf. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 3, Bk 4, pp. 143ff.
407. Lit. - is a slave to.
408. The two most important canonical collections of Tradition. Both are called Ṣaḥīḥ [sound]. They were compiled respectively by Muḥammad ibn 'Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī (d. 870) and Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj (d. 875).
409. Sa'd ibn Mālik ibn Sinān Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, 74/693-4.
410. MS قوما.
411. C واللواط.
412. C هذا تقرير كلام المانعين من صحة وبيان علة المنع وهذا الكلام مفهوم يستطق المنصف بتفصيل به ينكشف الغطاء.
413. See note 326 above. Differentiated from *khamr* which is made from

grapes. Cf. SEI, s.v. nabīdh.
414. Ibn Abī-l-Ḥawwārī (d. 860) and Abū Suleimān ad-Dārānī (d. 830), both Syrian mystics. Cf. A-G, pp. 26f.
415. C قائمان. ثابتان, Z, p. 26f.
416. MS ذلك.
417. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 3, Bk 2.
418. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 1, Bk 1.
419. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol, 3.
420. While not explicitly mentioning the biblical story of Uriah, the Koran indicates David's guilt feelings in that regard. Cf. K 38:21-25 and EI, s.v. Dāwūd.
421. Ḥasan b. 'Alī, the Prophet's grandson.
422. Cf. K 66:8.
423. Cf. K 89:27-8.
424. Cf. K 75:2.
425. K 53:33(32).
426. K 3:129-30(135-6).
427. D وقال أيضا المؤمن واه راقع فخيرهم من مات على رقعة أى واه بالذنوب راقع بالتوبة والندم.
428. K 28:54.
429. Cf. K 12:18.
430. K 9:103(102).
431. K 91:6-10.
432. Cf. K 12:53.
433. Cf. K 4:97(95).
434. MS الاخطار.
435. K 53:40(39).
436. K 51:22.
437. K 32:12. The root NKS appears both in 'handing their heads', and in 'standing on one's head'.
438. K 53:40(39).
439. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 1, Bk 9.
440. Bending of the body followed by two prostrations. Part of the Muslim worship rites.
441. C and D بعدهما.
442. Lit. - God's verses.
443. See note 385 above.
444. See note 438 above.

445. K 8:33.
446. Abū Muḥammad Sahl ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Yūnus al-Tustarī, d. 283/896. A-G, p. 34.
447. *Khulla* - divine friendship; Cf. *Khalīl* - friend, with reference to Abraham. See, A-G, p. 26.
448. MS الآية كلها.
449. K 9:113(112).
450. K 99:7.
451. D ومكون.
452. Sa'īd b. Salām al-Maghribi, d. 323/935.
453. K 9:121(120), 11:117(115), 12:90.
454. K 4:44(40).
455. K 16:43(41); 39:27(26); 68:33.
456. MS مدمة. Also in Z.
457. Z attributes this remark to Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz, d. 286/899. Cf. Arberry's translation from Farīd a-Dīn 'Attār's, *Tadhkirat al-Ayliyā'*, in A.S. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, pp. 218ff.
458. Ja'far b. Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣādiq, the sixth of the twelve Shī'ī Imāms, d. 148/756.
459. Or: Persistence Complex.
460. K 16:110(108-9).
461. Lit. - paste, putty.
462. MS اتكال على الله.
463. C and D خاتنا.
464. C هو الداء المعضل الذى يقبل.
465. MS, C and D لم يعلموا. Or else, as T has it: Since they know why they were created, would that they acted in accord with what they know.
466. MS, C and D تذاكروا.
467. Cf. K 17:94(92).
468. K 35:39(41).
469. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the second Caliph, d. 22/644. al-Zabīdī attributes this to Ibn 'Umar (Z, p. 612).
470. Ibn Jabr al-Makki al-Makhzūmī, 101/722-3.
471. Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. See note 358 above.
472. Cf. EI, s.v. Adam; H.N. Bialik, and Ravnitski, *Sefer Ha-Agada*, p. 17, par. 94; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 1, p. 79.

473. MS من بيت امرأة.
474. MS قال om.
475. Cf. K 38-35, 40; SEI, s.v. Sulaiman; I Kings 11:7 et seq.; I Kings 14:21; TB, *Sanhedrin* 20b, 21b; TB, *Shabbat* 56b; TB, *Gittin* 68b; *Kohelet Raba* 7; EJ, s.v. Solomon; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 4, pp. 169-172.
476. Cf. SEI, s.v. al-Khaḍir. A legendary figure associated with the story in the Koran, 18:60-82.
477. Cf. K 21:81; 38:37; *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. Solomon; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 4, p. 162.
478. K 12:31.
479. K 12:83.
480. K 12:87.
481. K 12:42.
482. K 12:42.
483. C and D سعادتهم.
484. 'Abdullāh b. Ghāfil b. Ḥabīb . . . b. Huḍayl, famous companion of the Prophet, often cited in the *Revival*, d. ca. 32/652-3.
485. Al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyāḍ, 187/802.
486. According to al-Zabīdī (Z, p. 618) this is 'Abdullāh b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Jalā' al-Baghdādī. See note 373 above.
487. Abū-l-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, one of the greatest orthodox exponents of Sufism, d. 298/910. A-G, pp. 34f.; EI, s.v. al-Djunayd.
488. Perhaps this should read بالرقة and be translated: . . . until it overpowered you in ar-Raqqa . . .
489. Cf. Z, كأنك لا تصلى بعدها.
490. A-G, p. 139.
491. Lit. – Practice abstention from this world.
492. Mu'ā*d* ibn Jabal, 18/639.
493. Note the rhyme رحيما . . . زعيما.
494. Ibrāhīm b. Adham, 161/778. A-G, pp. 30f.
495. First Caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, d. 680.
496. See note 304 above.
497. In law *jihād* consists of military action whose object is the expansion of Islam or its defense. It is a duty but through the ages there developed differing and often limiting applications. By the late Middle Ages the fulfillment of this duty was often viewed as a collective duty whose execution was mandated to the judgement of the ruler. *Jihād*, however, was considered the more important of the two. It is effort directed upon oneself for the attainment of moral and religious perfection. EI, s.v. Djihād.

498. al-Baṣrī. See note 358 above.
499. See note 272 above.
500. Salamat b. Dīnār al-Madanī, a famous Follower.
501. 'Imrān - father of Mary the prophetess. Cf. K 3:30-1; EI, s.v. 'Imrān.
502. The ascetic Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh as-Sijistānī, d. 255/869 in Jerusalem. A-G, p. 31.
503. C كيلا.
504. 'Umar II, Umayyad Caliph, d. 720.
505. A contemporary of Ḥasan al-Baṣri (I-II/VIII century).
506. 'Umar II's governor in Baṣra.
507. i.e., the saints.
508. al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, vol. 3, Bk. 2.
509. MS, C and D مخوفات.
510. K 92:6.
511. Cf. K 92:7.
512. K 92:8-9.
513. K 92:10.
514. Cf. K 92:11.
515. K 53:25.
516. Air, earth, fire, and water were considered by ancient philosophers to be the four basic elements.
517. K 75:20-1.
518. K 87:16.
519. Cf. K 42:17.
520. MS om. اذ قد لا يمكن ولا يكون; of the printed edition: . . . for this may be impossible and may not happen.
521. The blind poet, d. 1057.
522. R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Poetry*, p. 185.
523. d. 37 A.H.
524. *'Ulamā'*, the religious authorities.